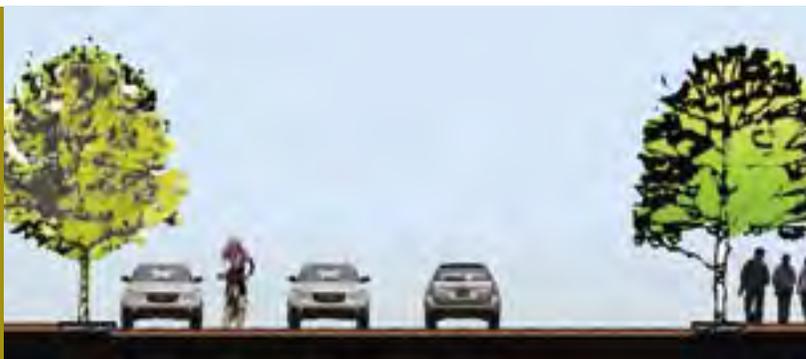




Downtown Master Plan City of Monroe, Washington



July 30, 2008

Downtown Master Plan

The City of Monroe, Washington

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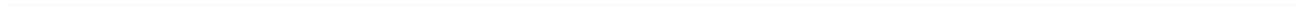
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Introduction

Downtown Monroe is poised for action at a time of opportunity. The regional economy is growing, and the mix of commercial and residential uses is changing in response. As the region changes, so will downtown. The question is: “How?” Will downtown assume a leadership role, or will it respond to forces around it? This plan sets a pro-active strategy in which downtown maximizes its opportunities and positions itself as the heart of the community.

Downtown offers something special: the potential to provide a small town, but urban, experience that could be unequaled in the region. As a gateway to regional recreation opportunities, framed by natural amenities, and energized by an active community leadership, it could be an exciting place to live, work, recreate and engage in cultural exchange that enriches the city and region.

In this context, the city has developed this master plan for downtown. It reflects the contributions of citizens who have engaged in a series of community workshops, as well as a variety of interest groups and organizations. Ideas generated in three community workshops are reflected in the recommendations.

The plan also builds on policies established in the City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan 2005-2025, the 2007 Transportation Plan and the 2006 Visitor/Assessment Plan.

This master plan sets forth a vision for downtown that describes what the community wants to be and how it will appear at some point in the future in Chapter 4, Urban Design Framework.

The master plan will serve as a framework for investment for both the public sector and the private sector. It will guide changes to city regulations, as well as help shape future capital improvement projects. The county government, as well as the school district will find recommendations that should be considered as well. It also should serve as a guide for private, civic-oriented groups, such as DREAM.

Businesses that already exist downtown should use the plan as a means of considering improvements, including expansions, while new potential businesses for downtown will find the vision useful in determining how to invest in the area. Other private investors, including those who may seek to secure housing in the area, will find the vision useful as well.

The plan describes a series of actions to improve the area. These are grouped into topics that reflect different urban design systems. The text is organized as follows:

Chapter 1: Existing Conditions

This summarizes assets and issues related to land use, parking, public information and other urban design systems.

Chapter 2: Land Use

This chapter recommends changes to the existing city zoning regulations that address land use.

Chapter 3: Market Overview

This chapter summarizes market trends and conditions that underlie assumptions in the plan.

Chapter 4: Urban Design Framework

This summarizes the key concepts in relationship to a general map of land use and key circulation elements.

Chapter 5: Historic Preservation

This chapter recommends a strategy for promoting preservation of historic resources downtown.

Chapter 6: Pedestrian & Bicycle Circulation

This chapter proposes a coordinated system of sidewalks, trails, paths and bicycle routes that will facilitate alternative modes of circulation.

Chapter 7: Automobile Circulation & Parking

This chapter illustrates ways to better distribute traffic volumes and improve parking opportunities.

Chapter 8: Infrastructure

Improvements to streets and utilities are described in this chapter.

Chapter 9: Public Places

This chapter provides concepts for special facilities that will enhance downtown and serve the community. These include parks, trails and plazas.

Chapter 10: Wayfinding & Public Signs

This chapter sets forth a concept for a coordinated design system to use in erecting signs that help users find and operate around downtown.

Chapter 11: Design Character

This chapter summarizes design objectives for the downtown sub-areas and provides images of appropriate building prototypes.

Chapter 12: Opportunity Sites

This chapter illustrates special improvement opportunities that exist downtown, by using a selection of sites. These are not formal proposals for these places, but rather demonstrate the potential for investment that will exist.

Chapter 13: Implementation

An implementation chapter will be drafted after the essential components of the master plan are fixed well enough that this can be discussed.

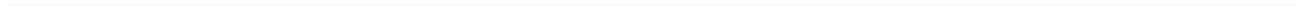
Implementation will take time. A fifteen to twenty year time frame is typical for a downtown plan. It also requires the participation of government, private, non-profit organizations and the private sector. Each has an important role to play.

Plan Process

The process for creating the Downtown Master Plan was a collaboration of local residents, city staff, special interest groups and the consultant team. Each group participated in identifying issues and goals and developing a vision for the future of Downtown. The planning process also included a Downtown Master Plan Advisory Committee comprised of citizens and representatives of local interest groups to ensure the Master Plan responded to the vision of the broadest spectrum of residents and business owners.

Community participation was a critical component of the planning process. A series of focus groups and public workshops were conducted throughout the development of the plan. Focus group participants included property owners, business owners, realtors, contractors, civic organizations and city departments. The result is a document that reflects the community's vision for the future.

The public workshop summaries are included in the Appendix of this document.



1

Existing Conditions

This Downtown Master Plan to guide the future development and redevelopment of downtown builds on the assets of the area, and also provides remedies for issues that currently challenge its success. This chapter summarizes the assets and issues that exist in Downtown Monroe. It also summarizes the results of previous planning reports and presents notes and observations from field visits, interviews, focus groups and public workshops. It then lays the foundation for the Urban Design Framework Plan that follows in Chapter 4.

Market Framework

The regional economy is generally sound and can support the expansion of uses and general improvements described in this plan. These include development of downtown housing, additional specialty retail and offices.

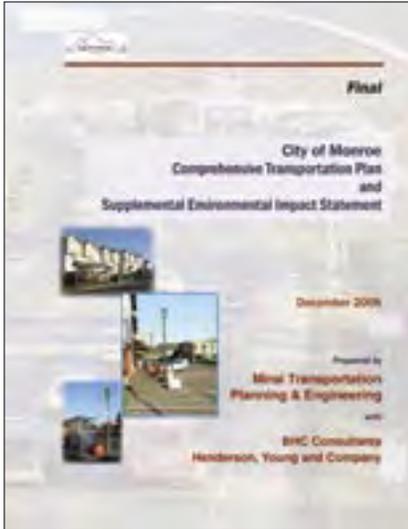
Snohomish County's diverse markets are growing, providing an opportunity for investment in the downtown area. The potential also exists to increase the market base of Downtown Monroe by adding more residents in the core area. These opportunities are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3, Market Overview.

While economic development opportunities exist downtown, there are some significant challenges. Other commercial centers, especially the new North Kelsey area and the US Route 2 (US 2) corridor, will capture a substantial portion of growth and redevelopment. Downtown Monroe must build on its strengths and establish a distinctive sense of place to attract growing market segments. High rush-hour traffic volumes, a lack of public amenities, and constrained parcels are other challenges to economic development. These are addressed in other portions of the plan as well.



Maintaining the character of downtown is an important goal of the Master Plan.

Conditions have changed since this planning effort began. There are risks from national markets that are having a negative impact on the region and may have on the City of Monroe. The first factor is the impact of the housing bubble on house prices and housing construction and financing. This is likely to take three to five years to play out. Nationally the house prices are dropping to 2003 levels, roughly 25 to 30 percent decline. While this is problematic, it may be less problematic than dollar devaluation and financing problems simply because any major project that starts planning now is likely to take four to five years to execute at which time it will likely have improved.



Design Policies and Plans Affecting Downtown Character

The City of Monroe Downtown Master Plan (Downtown Plan) builds on policies set forth in the City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan 2005-2025, the 2007 City of Monroe Transportation Plan and the 2006 Visitor/Assessment Plan. Other plans and reports that provide a foundation for the downtown plan include City Council's "Goals for a Growing City," adopted in 2007, and a "Sports Brand Analysis" conducted in 2007. In addition, existing zoning regulations, as set forth in the Monroe Municipal code, regulate the types of uses permitted in various parts of the planning area. Key elements from these documents are summarized in this section.

City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan 2005-2025

The City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan 2005-2025 is intended to provide a vision for the area. It examines issues pertaining to the natural environment, land use, transportation, housing, parks and recreational facilities, capital facilities, utilities, economic development, and shoreline development. The goals and policies of the city's comprehensive plan are intended to:

- Create a balance between uses while continuing to separate incompatible uses.
- Promote mixed-use development where appropriate through the adoption of a mixed-use ordinance and mixed-use overlay.
- Encourage commercial development to be located near major traffic corridors.
- Encourage and enhance a mixture of businesses and residences on Main Street.
- Provide a wide variety of development types and densities while still maintaining the character and vitality of existing residential neighborhoods.
- Develop a high quality system of park trails and corridors that access significant environmental features, public facilities, local neighborhoods and business districts.
- Create commercial areas that are pedestrian, bike and transit oriented.
- Reduce the amount of through traffic on neighborhood streets.
- Promote a healthy economy by supporting local businesses.



The Transportation Plan and Visitor/ Tourism Assessment are important documents that provide guidance for downtown.

These key points from the Comprehensive Plan are integral to the proposals set forth in the Downtown Master Plan. Creating an active, pedestrian oriented mixed-use environment that is enriched with trails and parks and supports a healthy economy is an important theme throughout the chapters that follow.

Transportation Plan

The City of Monroe Comprehensive Transportation Plan and Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement was concluded in April of 2007. Regional and local vehicle routes were studied as well as non-motorized modes of transportation and parking. Automobile circulation improvements recommended for downtown include intersection refinements, such as at US 2 and Main Street. The plan proposes installing bike lanes on Main Street west of Kelsey Street, and recommends an eastern extension of the Main Street bike route. It also cites the Loop Trail, which is shown to run along the edge of Al Borlin Park, and would then connect with the proposed Centennial Trail. The plan also calls for development of a downtown parking facility, with the location to be determined in later studies.

Visitor/Tourism Assessment

Completed in 2006, the Visitor/Tourism Assessment, completed by Destination Development, Inc. of Monroe, makes a number of recommendations or “suggestions” to develop a tourist program for the City of Monroe. Improving visibility and wayfinding from US 2 to downtown and SR 522 was a primary goal. The report suggested refining current signage and adding larger, more decorative wayfinding signs. Other goals included clearly defining downtown parking areas, improving intersections and enhancing streetscapes. The visitor / tourism assessment also suggested possibly narrowing Main Street and widening sidewalks to provide a more intimate shopping setting.

Monroe Municipal Code

The existing Municipal Code permits a mix of uses in the study area. Section 18.10.050 provides a matrix of permitted uses. The study area is zoned for the following land uses: General Commercial, Downtown Commercial, General Industrial, Professional Office, Public Open Space, and Multi-Family Residential. Additionally, the properties adjacent to Woods Creek and the Skykomish River are within the city’s shoreline boundary and subject to shoreline restrictions found in Chapter 19.01 of the Monroe Municipal Code. Chapter 18.82 of the Municipal Code details the site plan review process. Applications are reviewed by the Development Review Committee to ensure that all land uses and developments are consistent with the adopted plans, policies and ordinances of the city



The primary organizing element is the existing street grid. Main Street intersects this grid in a diagonal orientation.



US 2 is marked by large commercial developments, strip malls and fast food restaurants.



Buildings along Main Street typically abut the public right-of-way.



Main Street is the historic commercial and retail center of Monroe.



Single family homes mark the periphery of the downtown.

Specific issues related to the existing zoning are described in the Land Use chapter of this plan. In general, the existing zoning categories do not permit the mix of uses envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan or discussed in the workshops conducted for the Downtown Master Plan. For example, multifamily housing is not permitted in the General Commercial and Light Industrial Zones. In some cases, desired uses are permitted, but only subject to special review.

Assets and Issues

As a part of developing the Downtown Master Plan, the consultant team and members of the Monroe community identified and discussed downtown assets and issues at public workshops, focus groups and on-site inspections. Workshop participants engaged in several exercises designed to identify existing assets and issues in Downtown Monroe and to elicit public opinion on future opportunities. Public observations are discussed in the following sections.

Downtown Sub-areas

The study area is divided into four sub-areas: Historic Main Street Area, Al Borlin Park Neighborhood, Downtown Neighborhood, and the Rails and Road Neighborhood. See map, page 51.

The Historic Main Street Area is the traditional commercial and retail center of Monroe; it runs the length of Main Street from Madison Street to the railroad tracks. Lewis Street, which intersects Main Street, functions as a major arterial and truck route. Commercial establishments also flank Lewis Street near Main Street.

The Rails and Road Neighborhood is sandwiched between the railroad tracks and US 2. It is comprised of commercial, industrial, and storage buildings. More recent commercial development is occurring north of US 2, including the large North Kelsey project.

The Al Borlin Park Neighborhood comprises the portion of the study area bounded by Woods Creek, the Skykomish River to the south-east and Main Street and Lewis Street to the north and west. The area along Woods Creek is a mixture of industrial and residential.

The Downtown Neighborhood includes well-established and transitional residential blocks that frame the northwest and southwest edges of Downtown Monroe.

General Framework Assets

Throughout the downtown area, there are some special physical assets and human resources on which to build. These include:

- An active and committed business community;
- The existing inventory of historic structures;
- Streetscape Improvements;
- The proximity of traditional and transitional residential neighborhoods.
- Existing parks and open space
- The location near US 2

Development Patterns

Downtown Monroe is generally bounded by the railroad, McDougal Street, Madison Street and Al Borlin Park. The study area boundary is identified on all maps presented in this document by a dashed black line. Within the study area, a variety of commercial, institutional and residential uses are currently permitted.

Development patterns and the visual impact of development are influenced by the following elements:

- Traffic circulation networks,
- Building massing, orientation and height,
- Building setbacks,
- Landscape elements, and
- Parking.

In general, the greatest concentration of activity lies on Main Street and Lewis Street in the Historic Main Street Area. Commercial development abuts the public right-of-way and large display windows and sidewalks animated with product displays generate both pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Development in this area is denser than in the transitional areas abutting Main Street.

While the predominant development format has an early 20th century historic character with storefronts at the sidewalk edge, many sites have buildings set back from the street, with parking in front. An irregular character of industrial and residential building types exist along Ferry Street and Woods Street, which weakens the pedestrian appeal of these streets.

Historic lot sizes are relatively small. While this may facilitate small scale, incremental investment downtown, it may also impede larger scale projects, where potential developers would have to assemble several parcels.



The Post Office located on N. Blakeley Street.



School Administration Building as seen from the corner of S. Ferry and S. Fremont.



School Administration yard.



The Church of Christ on Madison Street.



Residential to commercial.

Public Facilities

Some key public facilities and services remain downtown. The central Post Office is located on Blakeley Street and the School Administration offices are on Fremont Street. The City Hall campus is nearby, just outside the plan boundary. Providing an environment that welcomes public uses is also a key objective.

Residential Land Use

The expansion of residential uses is an issue that relates to the viability of specialty retail, dining and entertainment uses that are an important component to the overall vision for Downtown Monroe. Although diverse land uses and commercial opportunities currently exist, additional multifamily housing is needed to support current and future businesses.

Ownership Patterns

Downtown properties, which reflect the tradition of small-scale entrepreneurial activity, are owned by a variety of groups and individuals. The task of assembling multiple properties into parcels for efficient large scale redevelopment is challenging and will require careful coordination and timing by developers.

General Character and Identity

While three to four blocks of Main Street convey a distinct identity, the remainder of downtown lacks focus in terms of established character and land use. Although there is a successful density of commercial development along Main Street, other blocks lack cohesion and unity. The potential for new buildings to be designed in a way that is contrary to historic design traditions is a related issue.

Development between Ann Street and Ferry Street offers an array of uses, but the large number of surface parking lots and undeveloped or underutilized lots create a fragmented appearance. Streetscape improvements along these two major streets are minimal, leaving a sense that Downtown Monroe is confined to Main Street.

The western portion of the study area, the Downtown Neighborhood, contains transitional residential properties. This type of development pattern reflects historical growth and land uses that are indicative of a smaller population. However, as the population of Monroe and the region continues to grow, there will be a need to increase the density of development that currently exists in the area.

The northern section of the study area is bounded by US 2 and the railroad tracks. Restaurants line both sides of the street in a typical strip commercial setting. Hotels exist along the north side of the street. Several primary entrances to downtown are located on US 2 and lack the proper gateway identification. Redevelopment and streetscape improvements could greatly enhance these locations.

Pedestrian Circulation and Trails

A few pedestrian amenities are in place along several blocks of Main Street, but rarely extend past the primary core of the Historic Main Street Area, which directly impacts the amount of pedestrian traffic in other areas of downtown. Amenities include benches, planters, trash receptacles, transit shelter and bicycle stands. Beyond Main Street, sidewalks lack continuity and handicap ramps have yet to be installed at several intersections. This discontinuity of clearly defined, safe and comfortable pedestrian connections is a significant impediment to redevelopment and economic activity on the peripheral edges of the study area. Workshop participants expressed the need for a more cohesive approach to pedestrian safety to entice residents, downtown employees and visitors to walk beyond Main Street.

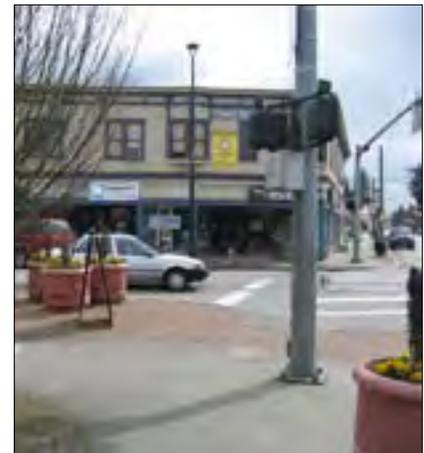
A primary goal of the Downtown Master Plan is to create logical and safe pedestrian connections throughout downtown to prompt local residents and visitors to expand their current walking distance. Streetscape improvements and safety directly affect the ambiance of the street and go hand-in-hand with development potential, especially retail activity that relies on pedestrian traffic and street visibility.

Sidewalk design and materials can have a direct impact on the character of the immediate area. Different paving materials are often used to denote intended uses. This provides visual clues to both pedestrians and drivers.

It is desirable to establish a sense of continuity in the design of pedestrian crossings throughout downtown. However, specific areas may merit unique crosswalk designs. An issue, therefore, is how to create a balance between visual continuity and the distinct identities for developing neighborhoods.



Pedestrian circulation.



Decorative paving.



Transitional residential sidewalks.



Auto Circulation



Auto Circulation



Parking



Parking

Automobile Circulation

Heavy vehicular traffic at the intersection of Lewis and Main Streets creates backups along both streets especially during the peak periods. The City addressed the congestion by restricting left-turns from Main to Lewis Street during this time. Truck traffic also creates a detrimental effect on the atmosphere of this busy hub in downtown Monroe. Some motorists also seek alternative routes, using side streets, which may further affect pedestrian crossing behavior. High traffic volumes and speeds are reported to be an issue, especially as an impediment to pedestrian circulation. While convenient automobile access into downtown is an important consideration, traffic volumes should not impede pedestrian activity. Achieving a healthy, safe balance between automobile circulation and pedestrian activity is critical.

The diagonal arrangement of Main Street, which is contrary to the predominant grid, adds interest to the downtown, but also affects options for circulation improvements. The railroad crossing does as well.

Connecting circulation across US 2 from the downtown core to the North Kelsey area is also a circulation issue. If these two areas are to work together as complementary forces, enhanced access between the two will be needed. These issues are described in more detail in Chapter 7, Automobile Circulation & Parking.

Parking

Downtown parking is provided in a variety of on-street configurations, as well as some private off-street lots. Insufficient parking was often cited during public workshops. If commercial activity increases in conjunction with additional housing, civic and/or cultural uses, additional parking will be required. A recent inventory of parking indicates that sufficient surface parking exists, especially within a three to four block radius from Main Street, but operations and management are issues. Many of these parking facilities are underutilized due to weak pedestrian connections. There are, however, reports of parking shortages in specific blocks during peak use periods.

In some cases, off-street parking lots are restricted for use by individual businesses, their employees and patrons. In addition, effective directional signage is missing, which impedes tourists and visitors from accessing these lots.

An interesting issue is the relationship of parking to development density. Ideally, parking is concentrated in multi-level parking structures to reduce the amount of land allocated to parked automobiles. This permits more intensive development of preferred uses on adjacent parcels. However, construction costs associated with structured parking are high and current land values may not justify such costs if considered solely as a function of existing land costs. That is, it would be cheaper to clear land and create more surface parking, but the result would be an eroded street edge and a loss of density that is essential for a vital downtown. These issues are described in more detail in Chapter 7, Automobile Circulation & Parking.

Signage, Gateways and Wayfinding

Due to the lack of adequate directional signage, many downtown resources are well-kept secrets. To the infrequent visitor and tourist, the location of the Historic Main Street Area is difficult to discern upon initial arrival into the city. In addition, little information is available to direct visitors to parking facilities. Some signage is mounted on existing utility poles, but appears to be erected independently of other municipal signage. Lack of a coordinated signage and wayfinding system was a key issue raised at several public workshops.

The planted median and flagpole at Madison and Main is one location where a gateway gesture has been made based on local knowledge and traffic patterns. However, other gateway locations only exist from a figurative standpoint. Gateway locations and signage should be combined with other directional signage systems to create a cohesive signage palette for both the city and downtown. New concepts could build from the planted median that is in place.



Signage



Al Borlin Park.



Al Borlin Park.

Parks & Open Space

A primary concern expressed by local residents is the lack of adequate space for public gatherings and events. A potential site for a public plaza is the current School Administration Yard, located east of the Monroe School District Administration Building. This area is large enough to provide sufficient space for gatherings, festivals or a regular farmer’s market. By incorporating several adjacent properties, civic facilities could be developed to frame the open plaza space.

Al Borlin Park, located on the eastern periphery of the study area, provides a large park close to Main Street. It could be enhanced by improving pedestrian trails and adding bicycle trails. Wayfinding signs and pedestrian trails should directly link the park to Main Street. This area is an asset to downtown and should be fully integrated into a park and open space master plan that directs appropriate activities to this area. Additional sites should also be explored to meet the needs of the growing community and to accommodate a variety of public uses.

Publicly accessible pocket parks and plazas are limited in Downtown Monroe. The downtown lacks publicly accessible plazas and green space to accommodate residents and visitors. In addition, promoting additional residential uses requires careful thought and consideration regarding accessible, active and passive public space.

Special Uses

Monroe residents have suggested a variety of special development projects and public improvement ideas at various times throughout the planning process. Several recommendations involve a specific use for which the appropriate location is a question. For example, some residents have suggested that the city acquire land and construct a public plaza for community events. If so, what is the best location for this important public amenity? What site would ensure long-term viability and economic benefit? Conversely, there are a number of underutilized sites scattered throughout downtown. Are any of these sites appropriate for a civic facility and what other types of public and private investments would be required in order to ensure a successful activity center? Specific sites may be available for redevelopment. The primary question is: “What is the best use, or range of uses that should be pursued?” The city’s park plan update recommends the school administration site as a possible location for special uses.

Opportunity Sites

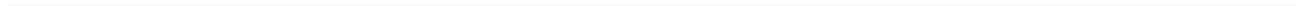
A number of sites have been identified for potential infill and/or redevelopment. Additional detail regarding potential development configurations is included in Chapter 11, Opportunity Sites.

Opportunity sites include:

- The School Administrative Building and adjacent yard
- Properties along Woods Creek and Al Borlin Park
- Properties south of Main Street between Ferry Street and Al Borlin Park
- The property at the intersection of US 2 and Main Street
- Downtown property

Historic Resources

Downtown boasts many buildings of historic significance. Several are traditional commercial storefront type buildings. Others are residential designs, some of which have been converted to other uses. Some of these buildings have been restored in a manner that preserves the integrity of these resources, but there is the potential that others could be inappropriately altered. In addition, new construction nearby could occur in a manner that is incompatible with the historic context. There is little information available to property owners about the merits of historic preservation. At present, there is no formal historic preservation program in Monroe that could address these issues. Preservation advocates have noted that this is a high priority concern. Please see Chapter 5, Historic Preservation for more detail.



2

Land Use

This chapter provides a land use strategy for implementing the Downtown Master Plan. In order to develop implementation strategies, the consultant team has generated a Land Use Strategies Diagram to identify specific land uses within each neighborhood area. Both the Neighborhood Areas Map and a description of each neighborhood area are contained in this section.

Land Use Strategies

To meet the vision of the downtown plan, specific land use and zoning changes may be required; this includes evaluating allowed and prohibited uses as well as assessing the current zoning of properties within the study area. This review and subsequent action will ensure that proposed land uses, within Downtown Monroe, are consistent with the City of Monroe Municipal Code. If the proposed land uses contradict existing code, implementation strategies will be recommended for specific code revisions. One strategy might be to create a new zone that is specific to Downtown (or at least the commercial areas), which allows a wide variety of uses subject to some performance standards and compliance with design guidelines

To date, the following areas of the downtown require a zoning change to reflect the land uses proposed in the Downtown Plan:

1. The following blocks, currently zoned General Industrial (GI), require zoning change to a designation that allows mixed-use development that includes commercial, office and residential components:
 - East and west sides of Ann Street between the railroad tracks and Woods Creek; and
 - North and south sides of Simmons Road between Ann Street and Woods Creek.
2. The following blocks, currently zoned Professional Offices (PO), require zoning change to a designation that allows mixed-use that includes commercial, office and residential components:
 - Small area on south edge of Fremont Street at the intersection with Charles Street.



A few downtown areas will require rezoning in order to allow proposed land uses.



The Historic Main Street Area should continue to have a high concentration of retail, dining and entertainment functions.

3. The following blocks, currently zoned Multi-Family (MF), require a zoning change to a designation that allows mixed-use that includes commercial, office and residential components.
 - Approximately 70% of the block bounded by Madison, Fremont, Lewis and McDougall Streets;
 - Approximately 25% of the block bounded by Lewis, Fremont, Ferry and McDougall Streets; and
 - Small area on south edge of Fremont Street between the intersections with Woods and Charles Streets.

Downtown Monroe Land Use Concepts

A fundamental component of the Downtown Monroe Master Plan is to invite a vibrant mix of uses, which contribute to a dynamic economy and support a high quality of life for residents. Land use regulations that encourage the appropriate combination of activities will be essential to achieve this goal.

The following are descriptions of the land use concepts presented in the downtown plan:

Historic Main Street Area

The Historic Main Street area is generally encompassed by the blocks along Main Street between Madison Street to the east and the railroad tracks to the northeast, and along Lewis Street between Fremont Street to the south and the railroad tracks to the north. The Historic Main Street Area will be the heart of specialty commercial uses that serve the entire community and even the region. The goal for this area is to continue to have a high concentration of retail, dining and entertainment functions, while also accommodating professional services and some residential housing. Cultural and recreational facilities should also be a part of the area's mix of uses.

However, there is limited available land area – in order for the Historic Main Street Area to achieve its potential, within a growing market, it will be important to extend these types of uses to the south and east, into the Al Borlin Park Neighborhood.

Al Borlin Park Neighborhood

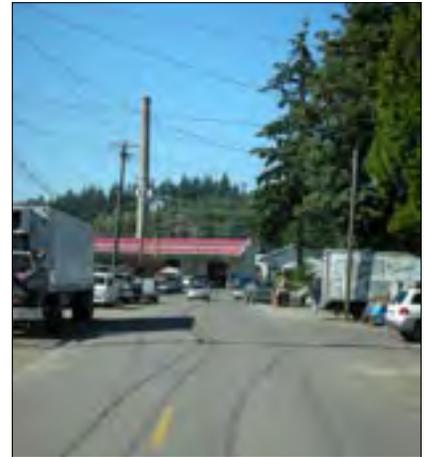
The Al Borlin Park Neighborhood is generally bordered by the Historic Main Street Area to the north, Railroad Avenue to the north, Woods Creek to the southeast and McDougall Street to the south and Lewis Street to the west. Revitalizing this neighborhood is a key element in the strategy for re-invigorating the entire downtown area. This area is underutilized, with a low-intensity mix of light industrial, residential and commercial activities.

The goal for this area is to accommodate an “urban village” character that contains a mix of uses at a moderate density. Recommended land uses should provide for a concentration of commercial, residential and civic functions. This combination is necessary in greater Downtown Monroe to promote it as a regional destination for special retail, dining and entertainment, as well as a place for knowledge-based businesses. These uses will thrive where they are mixed with downtown housing, including some housing in “live/work” configurations. This live/work and urban village model would accommodate and/or entice special forms of business that include production of custom-made products and art.

Another goal for this neighborhood is to promote a concentration of high-quality housing and amenities that will make this area attractive for residents and that serve a full range of markets and provide for affordable housing.

Civic and cultural facilities should also be a part of this neighborhood’s character. This may include recreational and arts uses as well as education-related activities. Finally, the Al Borlin Park Neighborhood should contain significant, well-designed parks and open space. There are opportunities to make use of natural amenities along the eastern edge that would make this a distinctive and appealing location for in-town housing. There are also opportunities to provide additional urban, civic green spaces within convenient walking distance of the Historic Main Street Area.

Areas along Woods Creek and the Al Borlin Park Neighborhood are recommended for enhanced pedestrian and bicycle connectivity. Also proposed along Woods Creek is an area for an overlook and water access at the creek itself, which would be linked into the enhanced bike and pedestrian ways. Areas of the Al Borlin Park Neighborhood, which are within the Woods Creek shoreline area, will have some development constraints due to the natural sensitivities of the creekside areas.



The Al Borlin Park Neighborhood will be the area where most new developments occur. These should provide an “urban village” character with a mix of uses.



Downtown Neighborhood

This Downtown Neighborhood frames the western edge of the Historic Main Street Area and contains many single-family houses, a few multifamily buildings and some commercial uses. This low-density mix of uses is appropriate for this neighborhood as a transitional edge between single-family neighborhoods and the Historic Main Street Area that provides a venue for some small businesses and close-in housing options. Future redevelopment in this area should maintain the current mix of uses and pattern of development.



The Downtown neighborhood should continue to have a low intensity mix of uses including single and multi-family housing as well as small businesses.



Future development in the Rails & Roads neighborhood should complement the visions for the greater downtown area while providing a mix of commercial, light industrial and potentially rail-related uses.

Rails & Road Neighborhood

The Rails and Road Neighborhood includes the lands that are to the north of the Historic Main Street Area, between the railroad and US 2. Many of the properties in this area are “double-fronted,” that is they have roads along the front and rear of the property, looking both to downtown and to the commercial strip. Light industrial uses mixed with other commercial activities are appropriate here. The uses in this neighborhood should complement the visions for the Historic Main Street Area and the goals for the downtown as a whole. The city should consider permitting functions that make use of the rail lines, even potential passenger service.

Land Use Concepts

The following maps, Scenario A - Mixed-Use and Moderate Rate Build-Out Alternative and Scenario B - Mixed-Use and Accelerated Rate Build-out Alternative, reflect the land use discussion noted above. The difference between the two options is the intensity of infill, with Scenario A being less intense than Scenario B. Scenario B, the Preferred Land Use Alternative, also includes two mixed-use parking facilities. In addition to the two scenarios outlined in this plan, No Action Alternative was included in the environmental review document for this plan.

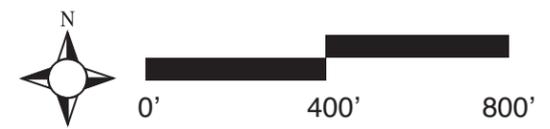
Scenario A: Mixed-Use and Moderate Rate Build-out Alternative. This option will amend the various comprehensive plan land-use designations (Public, R8-11 Dwellings per Acre, and Industrial) and associated zoning by establishing a new mixed-use designation that allows for a combination of residential, professional office, and/or commercial uses. This alternative assumes that development and redevelopment of the sub-area is primarily market based, without incentives and/or public/private partnerships, and with voluntary use of the design guidelines. Some minor traffic, street, and parking improvements would be planned to implement this alternative.

The Preferred Land Use Alternative, Scenario B: Mixed-Use and Accelerated Rate Build-out Alternative. This option will amend various comprehensive plan land-use designations (Public, R8-11 Dwellings per Acres, and Industrial) and associated zoning by establishing a new mixed-use designation that allows for a combination of residential, professional office, and/or commercial uses. The design guidelines will be adopted as development standards within the Monroe Municipal Code and applied to all new development and/or redevelopment activities within the downtown planning area. A catalyst project will also be identified to accelerate the implementation of the Plan through the use of a public/private partnership. Specific public works projects will be identified for inclusion within the appropriate six-year capital improvement plan, including, but not limited to streets and parking facilities, water, sanitary sewer, and/or storm water system improvements.

Scenario C: No Action Alternative. This option will allow future development and redevelopment of the subarea to proceed based on existing comprehensive designations, zoning and development regulations specified in the current Monroe Municipal Code.



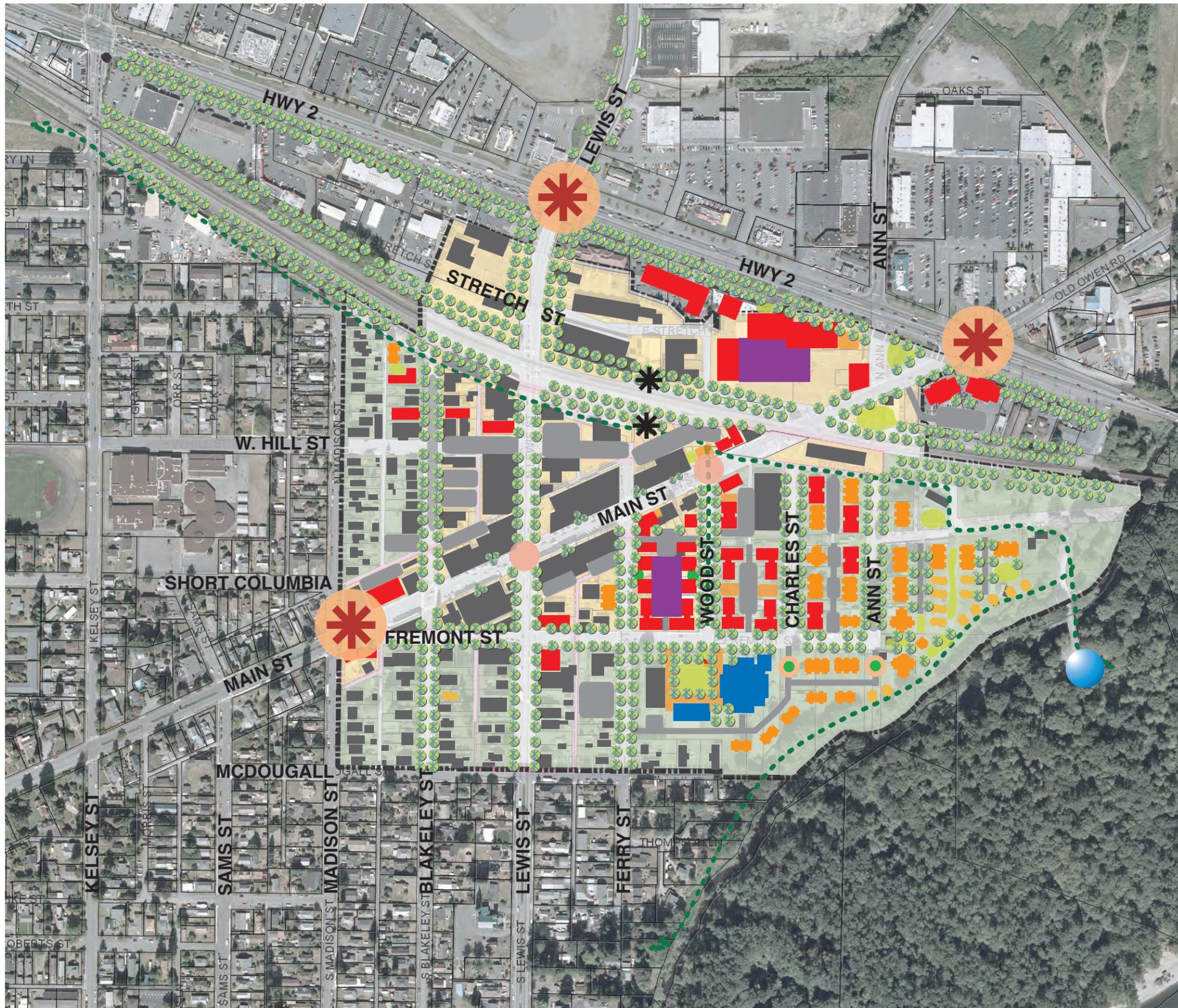
Key	
Mixed-use infill	
Multifamily/Live-work	
Duplex/Townhome	
Civic Facility	
Existing Buildings	
Plaza-Public Art Enhancement	
Park Improvement	
Water Feature	
Green Entry Feature	
Landscape Improvement	
Enhanced Pedestrian and Bicycle connectivity	
Surface Parking	
Gateway Intersection	
Enhanced Intersection	



City of Monroe, Washington Downtown Master Plan Scenario A

Winter & Company
Hoshide Williams Architects
Urban Advisors
Mirai Associates
Reid Middleton





Key	
Mixed-use infill	
Multifamily/Live-work	
Duplex/Townhome	
Civic Facility	
Existing Buildings	
Plaza-Public Art Enhancement	
Park Improvement	
Water Feature	
Green Entry Feature	
Landscape Improvement	
Enhanced Pedestrian and Bicycle connectivity	
Surface Parking	
Gateway Intersection	
Enhanced Intersection	
Mixed-use infill/Parking Facility	
Potential Rail Stop	



City of Monroe, Washington Downtown Master Plan Scenario B

Winter & Company
Hoshide Williams Architects
Urban Advisors
Mirai Associates
Reid Middleton

3

Market Overview

Monroe finds itself in a strategic position, geographically and economically. Because it lies within commuting distance of cities in the inner ring of Seattle's suburbs, it will continue to experience growth in new residents who are employed along these "high tech" corridors. This means that demand for goods and services will increase as well.

Downtown Monroe also is drawing regionally, because it has built a reputation for specialty goods and services. Anecdotal reports indicate that Hispanic foods, gifts and some personal services are popular with customers within a thirty mile radius and more. As the regional population increases, there is the potential to capture more of this market, if downtown can present itself as a special destination.

A question is: "What will be the market share that downtown achieves with this growth?"

As the citywide market grows, US 2 will continue to capture a substantial portion, and the new North Kelsey development will as well. Other neighborhood centers will also see growth.

Downtown has the potential to capture a portion of this market as well. Specialty retail, dining and entertainment are key areas of opportunity. In addition, there is the potential to increase the population of downtown residents, which will also broaden the base of the market for commercial enterprises.

Note that some of the projections in this report forecast population numbers for the years of 2014 and 2015. These are used to project near-term market opportunities. One should keep in mind that the city has adopted population targets for the year 2025 of 20,540 in the city. With this projection, the employment target for 2025 is 11,800 in the city..

Demographic Change

The future of Downtown Monroe depends on the demographic change occurring within Monroe and also on a far wider area that constitutes Monroe's market for retail and services. The figures presented here reflect both city and 20 minute drive time areas.

Change in the City of Monroe based upon past trends is shown in the table below. It indicates that households and income are rising, and that the proportion of renter households is expected to decline as average incomes rise. At the same time, the number of family households is declining very slightly, and that when one considers the numbers of non-family households required to make the percentage of change, that they comprise 38 percent of the change. This does not necessarily mean an influx of single persons; rather it is likely to indicate older family households in which one partner has passed on, as well as slightly more households in which people live as partners but are not family. Most households remain family households.

City of Monroe Demographic Change 2000 to 2015

	2000	2007	2015	07 to 15
Population*	13,795	15,766	16,790	1,024
Households	4,173	4,621	4,963	342
Families	3,060	3,351	3,563	212
Non-Family Households	1,113	1,270	1,400	130
Percent Non-Family	27%	27%	28%	38%
Average Household Size	2.83	3.41	3.38	2.99
Owner Occupied HUs	2,576	3,009	3,245	236
Renter Occupied HUs	1,597	1,613	1,719	106
Percent Renter Occupied	38%	35%	35%	31%
Median Age	31.3	32.9	32.9	32.9
Median Household Income	\$50,312	\$66,263	\$80,181	
Average Household Income	\$56,771	\$76,915	\$95,562	

Source ESRI BIS

* Includes group quarters population

The projection for Monroe shows modest growth based upon past trends of 342 households. Because these projections are based upon past trends rather than an analysis of planning changes within the city, they do not reflect the impact of potential changes allowing more housing within the master plan. To assess the market for such change, the 20-minute drive time was assessed. The projected change is shown in the table below.

The 20 minute drive shows demographic trends similar to those in Monroe but with some interesting differences.

City of Monroe: 20 Minute Drive Demographic Change 2000 to 2015

	2000	2007	2015	07 to 15
Population	105,866	121,906	132,720	10,814
Households	36,799	42,952	47,002	4,050
Families	27,931	32,347	35,118	2,771
Non-Family Households	8,868	10,605	11,884	1,279
Percent Non-Family	24%	25%	25%	32%
Average Household Size	2.30	2.28	2.27	2.67
Owner Occupied HUs	28,457	34,481	37,817	3,336
Renter Occupied HUs	8,342	8,472	9,185	713
Percent Renter Occupied	23%	20%	20%	18%
Median Age	34.6	36.7	37.4	45.3
Median Household Income	\$61,620	\$80,498	\$96,405	
Average Household Income	\$71,380	\$95,685	\$117,973	

Source: ESRI BIS

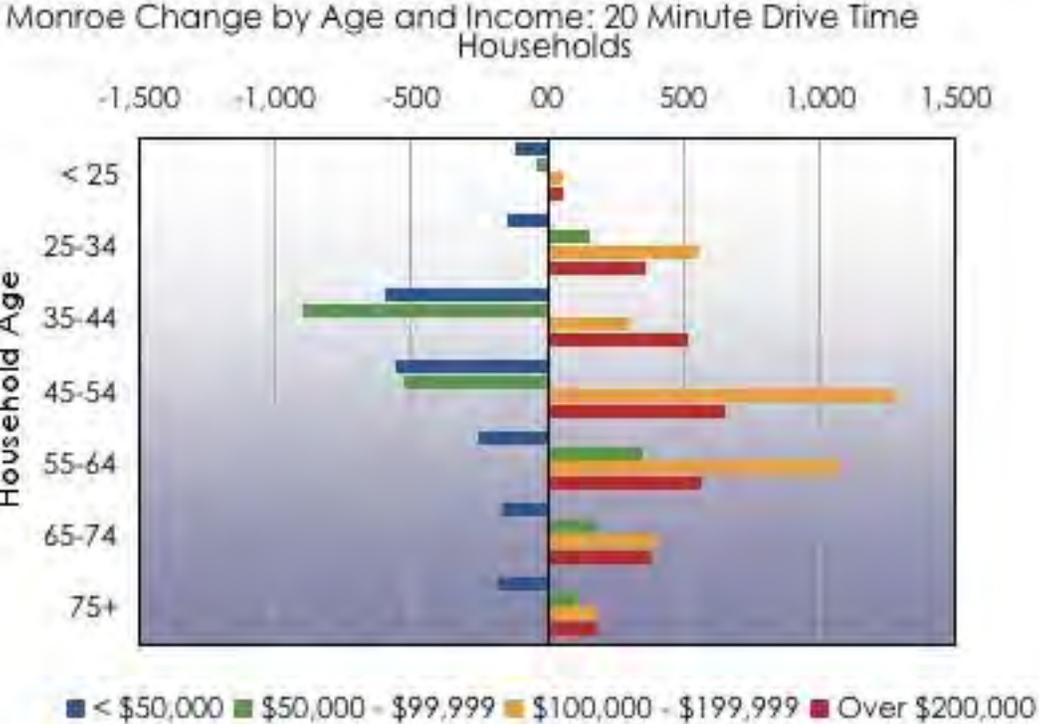
Within the 20-minute drive from Monroe, households and income are increasing as they are in Monroe. Unlike Monroe, the households are also aging, have higher average incomes, smaller household size, higher home ownership and are less likely to be non-family households.

Change by Income and Age

When we examine change by household age and income we see that in the City of Monroe, households between 45 and 64 years of age with household incomes over \$50,000 make up the largest change. In all age categories, households below \$50,000 are diminishing.



In the 20-minute drive time the income shift is similar but with larger percentages of households over 55.



For the City of Monroe this means that household growth in the area housing market is concentrated in higher income households over 45 years of age with a high percentage of ownership, but with a local demand in Monroe for rental space.

Consumer Spending and Sales

In general, Monroe captures far more in sales than is spent by residents. Monroe is a retail center for an area that extends far beyond its urban growth area. Using data from the Washington Department of Revenue, and projecting a capture ratio based on projected growth, the charts below show potential for further retail and service uses in Monroe.

Several categories differ from the rest in capture—one is Books and Periodicals. According to the Washington DOR, sales for reading materials within the City of Monroe have declined sharply from 2004 to 2006, from \$1.6 million in taxable sales to approximately \$567,000 in 2006. Consumer spending in the category for a 10-minute drive time is over \$2.4 million, indicating that a large proportion of local market spending is possibly being lost in this category. However, since the advent of large general stores, that spending may be occurring in the city, but at general merchandise stores or large bookstores outside the city limits.

Monroe Historic Retail Sales 2004 to 2006

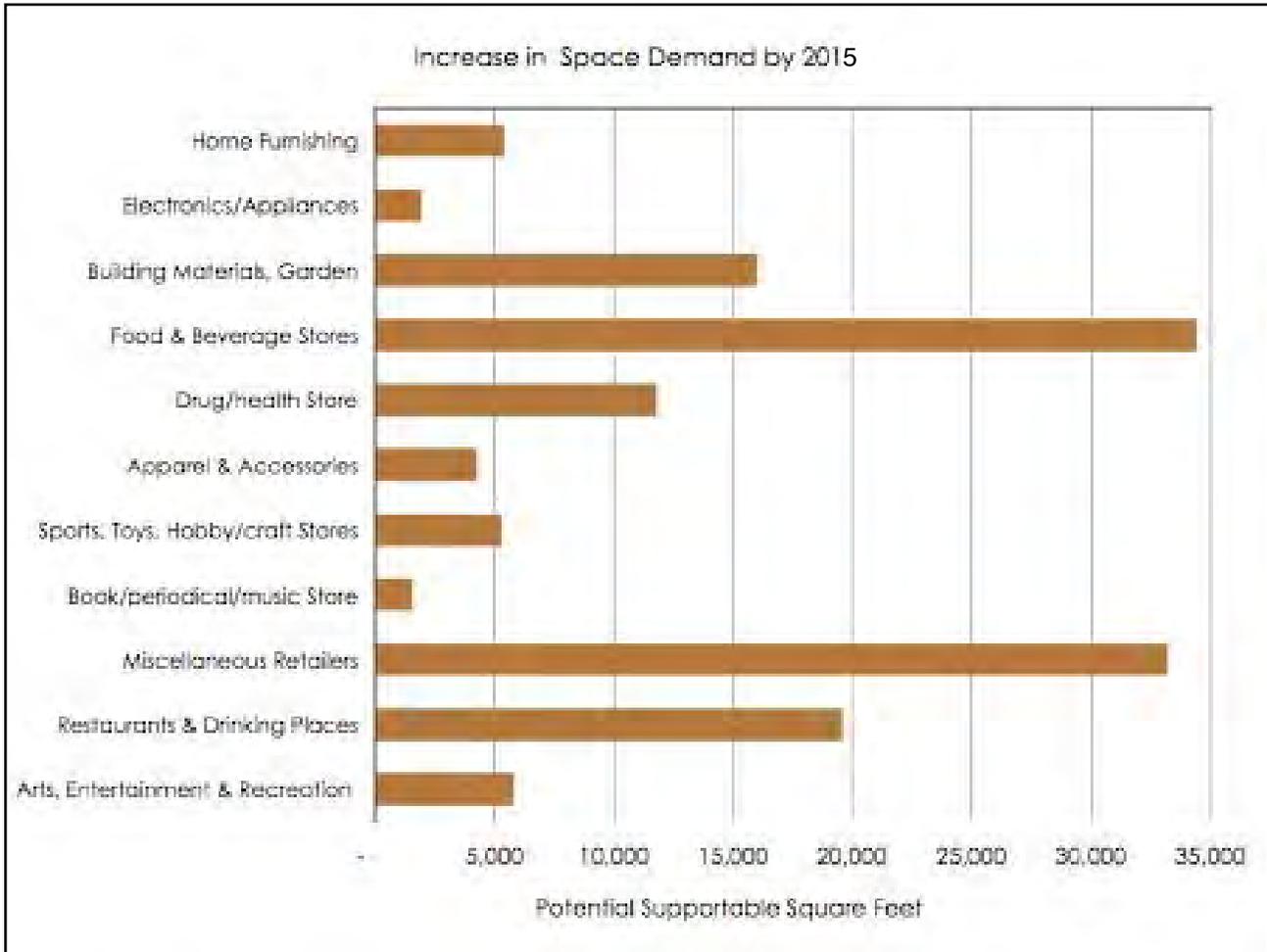
Industry and NAICS Number	2004	2005	2006
	Gross Sales	Gross Sales	Gross Sales
Motor Vehicles & Parts 441	\$ 84,053,338	\$ 99,279,841	\$ 107,022,682
New & Used Auto Dealers 4411	\$ 68,489,590	\$ 78,754,435	\$ 80,219,984
Rv, Boat, Motorcycle Dealers 4412	\$ 1,547,502	\$ 2,873,129	\$ 7,717,949
Automotive Parts & Tire 4413	\$ 12,967,992	\$ 16,334,355	\$ 17,875,266
Furniture & Home Furnishing 442	\$ 4,555,335	\$ 5,031,935	\$ 5,185,605
Electronics & Appliances 443	\$ 2,757,894	\$ 3,870,059	\$ 4,255,192
Appliances, Tv & Other Electronics 44311	\$ 1,389,581	\$ 2,135,004	\$ 2,384,543
Computers & Software 44312	\$ 1,365,195	\$ 1,659,432	\$ 1,773,226
Building Materials, Garden Equip & Supplies 444	\$ 14,101,660	\$ 14,863,410	\$ 17,305,535
Building Materials 4441	\$ 12,790,387	\$ 13,196,694	\$ 15,312,509
Lawn & Garden Supplies & Equip 4442	\$ 1,319,419	\$ 1,706,305	\$ 2,044,835
Food & Beverage Stores 445	\$ 55,216,095	\$ 54,304,834	\$ 53,721,034
Grocery & Convenience Stores 4451	\$ 55,153,874	\$ 54,191,838	\$ 53,452,147
Other Food & Beverage Stores 4452, 4453	\$ 651,780	\$ 674,738	\$ 769,736
Drug/health Stores 446	\$ 14,132,322	\$ 14,255,961	\$ 14,140,960
Gas Stations & Convenience Stores W/pumps 447	\$ 40,677,812	\$ 36,905,058	\$ 40,006,513
Apparel & Accessories 448	\$ 4,319,214	\$ 4,627,035	\$ 4,828,912
Clothing & Shoe Stores 4481, 4482	\$ 2,638,932	\$ 2,698,306	\$ 2,868,764
Jewelry & Luggage Stores 4483	\$ 1,871,359	\$ 2,159,449	\$ 2,190,271
Sporting Goods, Toys, Book & Music Stores 451	\$ 5,927,638	\$ 4,856,187	\$ 5,046,361
Sporting Goods, Toys, Hobby/craft Stores 4511	\$ 4,245,185	\$ 4,311,214	\$ 4,766,993
Book/periodical/music Store 4512	\$ 1,681,359	\$ 603,243	\$ 360,294
General Merchandise Stores 452	\$ 65,154,860	\$ 71,638,371	\$ 74,925,554
Department Stores 4521	D	D	\$ 541,770
General Merchandise Stores 4529	\$ 75,948,086	\$ 83,505,622	\$ 86,379,855
E-commerce & Mail Order 4541	\$ 10,148,464	\$ 13,716,362	\$ 15,156,692
Miscellaneous Retailers 453, 4542, 4543	\$ 32,401,708	\$ 33,137,846	\$ 43,899,876
Restaurants, Food Services & Drinking Places 722	\$ 29,675,766	\$ 35,297,112	\$ 38,331,785
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation 71	\$ 2,197,565	\$ 2,721,179	\$ 2,504,702

Monroe Estimated Sales 2007 and 2015

	2007 Sales	2015 Sales
Furniture & Home Furnishing	\$ 5,532,725	\$ 7,362,088
Electronics & Appliances	\$ 5,285,547	\$ 7,033,182
Building Materials, Garden Equip & Supplies	\$ 19,170,896	\$ 25,509,640
Food & Beverage Stores	\$ 52,988,753	\$ 70,509,172
Drug/health Stores	\$ 14,145,282	\$ 18,822,336
Apparel & Accessories	\$ 5,105,892	\$ 6,794,125
Sporting Goods, Toys, Hobby/craft Stores	\$ 5,051,477	\$ 6,721,719
Book/periodical/music Store	\$ 166,784	\$ 516,504
General Merchandise Stores	\$ 80,347,346	\$ 106,913,722
Miscellaneous Retailers	\$ 51,098,834	\$ 67,994,363
Restaurants, Food Services & Drinking Places	\$ 43,564,987	\$ 57,969,494
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	\$ 2,674,012	\$ 4,964,992

Other such categories are Apparel, Sporting Goods and Toys which may be spread between general stores and miscellaneous retailers that sell items in many categories. There are two ways to look at these figures: one is that the big boxes have taken the available market; the other is that there may be an opportunity to capture lost local spending with niche categories in which a local retailer can offer better and more knowledgeable service than a large retailer and thus appeal to and capture local preference.

To estimate the increase in the demand for retail space, future demand was calculated based on current capture ratios of area spending applied to projected spending in 2015. The results are shown in the chart below. It is clear that there is sufficient demand to add retail space to bolster downtown.



It is possible that much of this demand can be absorbed in existing stores that may gain in sales per square foot. As noted earlier, this is an analysis of likely capture based on current trends. For categories such as books and apparel, where the capture is very far below the spending in the local and wider areas, creating a stronger destination in the downtown core, with more offerings may help to greatly increase capture and reverse the current trend.

Housing In Downtown

To provide a goal for housing in Downtown Monroe, we performed the demographic analysis and also considered the market segmentation by profiles of household types. In this case an analysis of permits was performed of to understand the building capacity of the market within the UGA. Permits within the Monroe UGA historically averaged ± 150 per year. Over 5 years this would result in the production of 538 single-family units, 164 multifamily, 39 duplexes and 9 other units in the UGA without considering the planning for downtown. If Monroe develops the town center, there is a new market for in-town units supported by local area growth. A conservative capture of this new market could add 150 units in downtown by 2015.

Employment Space in Downtown

To understand the potential for increasing employment space in downtown, Urban Advisors looked at occupation and industry projections from the State of Washington and estimated the space demand based upon occupations that use office or its equivalent. Based upon this estimate using State of Washington projections, there will be a space demand for slightly over a million square feet in Snohomish County. Given the current capture of employment in Monroe, a reasonable goal for downtown would be the addition or renovation of approximately 52,000 square feet for employment use (as opposed to retail shops).

Appendix: Consumer Spending

Monroe Area
2007 Consumer Spending

	Drive Time from Center of Monroe		
	5 min.	10 min.	20 min.
Apparel and Services	\$14,029,530	\$28,371,827	\$138,990,035
Men's	\$2,618,739	\$5,326,023	\$26,101,687
Women's	\$4,647,239	\$9,467,462	\$46,412,060
Children's	\$2,411,492	\$4,812,419	\$23,437,666
Footwear	\$2,279,348	\$4,557,398	\$22,310,719
Watches & Jewelry	\$1,155,450	\$2,383,216	\$11,754,391
Apparel Products and Services (1)	\$917,262	\$1,825,309	\$8,973,512
Computer			
Computers and Hardware for Home Use	\$1,279,301	\$2,572,516	\$12,542,837
Software and Accessories for Home Use	\$180,617	\$362,883	\$1,762,496
Entertainment & Recreation	\$19,460,567	\$39,845,603	\$194,451,170
Fees and Admissions	\$3,562,253	\$7,466,545	\$36,960,149
Membership Fees for Clubs (2)	\$909,557	\$1,927,225	\$9,533,213
Fees for Participant Sports, excl. Trips	\$664,450	\$1,385,764	\$6,803,631
Admission to Movie/Theatre/Opera/Ballet	\$869,810	\$1,767,378	\$8,690,253
Admission to Sporting Events, excl. Trips	\$346,953	\$721,025	\$3,551,978
Fees for Recreational Lessons	\$771,483	\$1,665,153	\$8,381,074
TV/Video/Sound Equipment	\$6,554,275	\$13,077,874	\$63,325,481
Community Antenna or Cable Television	\$3,655,842	\$7,305,040	\$35,338,428
Color Televisions	\$806,872	\$1,627,445	\$7,931,204
VCRs, Video Cameras, and DVD Players	\$225,403	\$455,005	\$2,206,117
Video Cassettes and DVDs	\$355,420	\$694,254	\$3,337,522
Video Game Hardware and Software	\$193,078	\$382,309	\$1,854,742
Satellite Dishes	\$8,734	\$17,768	\$85,684
Rental of Video Cassettes and DVDs	\$357,383	\$692,482	\$3,314,630
Sound Equipment (3)	\$919,935	\$1,841,690	\$8,957,584
Rental and Repair of TV/Sound Equipment	\$31,608	\$61,881	\$299,570
Pets	\$2,468,933	\$5,094,614	\$24,884,670
Toys and Games	\$1,054,233	\$2,116,762	\$10,276,771
Recreational Vehicles and Fees (4)	\$2,603,723	\$5,496,847	\$26,803,843
Sports/Recreation/Exercise Equipment (5)	\$1,226,201	\$2,511,703	\$12,303,940
Photo Equipment and Supplies (6)	\$806,021	\$1,645,533	\$8,001,926
Reading (7)	\$1,184,928	\$2,435,725	\$11,894,390

2007 Consumer Spending	Drive Time from Center of Monroe		
	5 min.	10 min.	20 min.
Food	\$46,849,851	\$93,650,495	\$454,622,131
Food at Home	\$27,737,272	\$55,307,999	\$267,999,406
Bakery and Cereal Products	\$3,967,516	\$7,926,910	\$38,458,602
Meat, Poultry, Fish, and Eggs	\$7,177,066	\$14,293,646	\$69,282,293
Dairy Products	\$3,033,195	\$6,058,147	\$29,358,987
Fruit and Vegetables	\$4,823,763	\$9,627,806	\$46,764,787
Snacks and Other Food at Home (8)	\$8,735,732	\$17,401,490	\$84,134,737
Food Away from Home	\$19,112,579	\$38,342,496	\$186,622,725
Alcoholic Beverages	\$3,443,712	\$6,884,515	\$33,658,699
Nonalcoholic Beverages at Home	\$2,399,561	\$4,762,378	\$23,004,951
Financial			
Investments	\$8,621,996	\$18,851,507	\$93,780,107
Vehicle Loans	\$35,885,847	\$71,314,414	\$342,676,619
Health			
Nonprescription Drugs	\$664,487	\$1,317,601	\$6,317,788
Prescription Drugs	\$2,974,316	\$5,958,836	\$28,386,669
Eyeglasses and Contact Lenses	\$462,486	\$955,919	\$4,645,765
Home			
Mortgage Payment and Basics (9)	\$52,230,501	\$111,807,406	\$553,330,337
Maintenance and Remodeling Services	\$10,980,504	\$24,184,054	\$121,194,915
Maintenance and Remodeling Materials (10)	\$2,168,124	\$4,651,409	\$22,972,545
Utilities, Fuel, and Public Services	\$24,314,327	\$48,851,320	\$236,375,531
Household Furnishings and Equipment			
Household Textiles (11)	\$799,986	\$1,644,305	\$8,059,348
Furniture	\$3,786,665	\$7,816,066	\$38,509,209
Floor Coverings	\$513,745	\$1,113,213	\$5,571,471
Major Appliances (12)	\$1,654,282	\$3,410,301	\$16,626,575
Housewares (13)	\$563,984	\$1,141,842	\$5,566,340
Small Appliances	\$201,367	\$409,837	\$1,998,037
Luggage	\$60,814	\$126,487	\$622,516
Telephones and Accessories	\$224,218	\$465,850	\$2,295,590

	Drive Time from Center of Monroe		
	5 min.	10 min.	20 min.
Household Operations			
Child Care	\$2,647,654	\$5,345,266	\$26,389,733
Lawn and Garden (14)	\$2,406,617	\$5,084,276	\$24,946,884
Moving/Storage/Freight Express	\$312,593	\$602,390	\$2,899,554
Housekeeping Supplies	\$4,281,627	\$8,645,469	\$41,875,910
Insurance			
Owners and Renters Insurance	\$2,732,625	\$5,692,134	\$27,573,504
Vehicle Insurance	\$8,201,537	\$16,521,436	\$80,216,100
Life/Other Insurance	\$3,537,955	\$7,454,041	\$36,514,211
Health Insurance	\$10,539,508	\$21,293,820	\$102,593,242
Personal Care Products (16)	\$2,673,244	\$5,319,969	\$25,756,391
School Books and Supplies (17)	\$706,585	\$1,323,964	\$6,227,403
Smoking Products	\$2,547,556	\$4,953,705	\$23,732,159
Transportation			
Vehicle Purchases (Net Outlay) (18)	\$32,673,945	\$65,688,886	\$317,663,242
Gasoline and Motor Oil	\$11,378,154	\$22,691,126	\$109,489,177
Vehicle Maintenance and Repairs	\$6,076,719	\$12,223,731	\$59,296,004

4

Urban Design Framework

This Downtown Master Plan presents a framework of urban design and land use concepts to guide future infill and redevelopment. This chapter summarizes the key components of the urban design framework. More detail for each component appears in subsequent chapters. For example, a recommendation is made to improve circulation and parking; specific means of implementing such parking improvements are found in the parking and circulation chapter.

A Vision for Downtown

Working side by side in public workshops, Monroe residents drafted vision statements for downtown. Participants were asked to create a "vision" of what the community wants to be and how it will appear at some point in the future. Several comments are noted; also refer to the Appendix to see the complete workshop summaries.

Their comments:

“Downtown Monroe is a cohesive yet diverse community where:

- Downtown Monroe offers a welcoming, pedestrian-friendly, clean, vibrant atmosphere within a lush green setting;
- A community gathering space and civic buildings provide a place for an array of public programs and event spaces in the heart of downtown;
- The economy is strong, sustainable, year-round and anchored by a healthy, vibrant Main Street with businesses providing specialty goods and services to a thriving community;
- Buildings exhibit high quality construction consistent with the historic context of the city, and new development conveys innovation and integrates with existing historic development patterns;
- Mixed-use developments, including residential, retail, office space and parking, are integrated in a manner consistent with the historic character of the downtown;
- Al Borlin Park and Woods Creek are reclaimed as community assets and are focal points of the downtown. Several segments of the park and creek offer direct pedestrian access to downtown residents and visitors to nearby neighborhoods and regional trail systems.
- Active citizens promote a wide array of public festivals and events throughout the year.”

In summary, downtown should remain the heart of the community with a strengthened economy and diverse range of businesses, services and public amenities. It should contain specialty retail, dining and entertainment opportunities and maintain its current position as the hub of professional services.

How will the downtown appear in 2025?

With the implementation of the urban design framework described in this plan, Downtown Monroe will be an exciting, attractive place to work, live and visit:

As one approaches the downtown on Main Street, street trees and a planted median guide one to the historic Main Street. Flanking the historic Main Street are restaurants, specialty retail shops, and commercial stores that serve residents and visitors alike. The Historic Main Street Area exhibits a variety of new infill development that complements the large inventory of historic structures. New residential development in the form of townhomes, mixed-use buildings, and multifamily/live-work structures create a vibrant eastern edge to the downtown commercial core.

People of all ages come to downtown to frequent the civic facilities center, outdoor plazas and wide variety of retail businesses, restaurants and galleries. Coordinated directional signs orient both citizens and visitors to important facilities and public parking. Landscaped parking lots, on-street parking and a parking structure serve businesses and the civic plaza and provide convenient and safe parking opportunities for employees and shoppers.

Lively and lush streetscapes invite pedestrians to walk comfortably throughout downtown while they conduct business, visit with friends and explore cultural offerings, and civic facilities. Sidewalks, with handicap accessibility, link the entire downtown and crosswalks with special decorative paving to identify key intersections and enhance pedestrian and vehicular safety.

A key asset is an improved Al Borlin Park and Woods Creek, which includes expanded and enhanced trails, walkways, plazas and overlooks. New mixed-use development between Ferry Street and Al Borlin Park is supported by downtown residents who reside in townhomes abutting the enhanced Woods Creek. The streets that cross Main Street, Blakeley, Lewis, Woods, Charles and Ann, are enhanced with street trees, landscaping and street furnishings. Fremont and Woods Streets also provide an alternative route around Main.

Along Main Street, street level storefronts of new and existing buildings present a diverse array of businesses, services and specialty retail establishments, including clothing, gifts, galleries, housewares and furnishings. These offer both residents and visitors activities throughout the day and evening.

A Market Strategy

The vision for an active and thriving downtown is based on some key market-driven principles: Downtown becomes the center for civic and cultural activities, which ultimately strengthens downtown and secures its place as the region's commercial heart. Continued success of downtown depends on allowing a variety of uses, in some cases within the same building, that include residential, commercial and cultural attractions. Providing dining and entertainment uses for downtown residents should also be a goal, although primary services such as groceries, clothing and personal services are already in place.

The economic strategy focuses on several key market segments:

City Residents

The spending power of many Monroe residents is growing. Capturing disposable income and expanding the market of people that want to live in downtown will assure continued success for downtown merchants.

Regional Visitors

The number of regional visitors can be increased. Visitors are attracted to downtown because of the vibrant atmosphere of Main Street and diverse shopping and dining opportunities. In addition, the city can garner a substantial number of visitors for local celebrations, festivals and recreational opportunities. Businesses that cater specifically to visitors and the tourism industry would benefit from this influx.

Heritage Tourism

Heritage tourism, a growing national movement, includes travel to natural, historic and cultural attractions and focuses on authenticity, accessibility and local involvement.

Heritage tourism balances visiting interesting places with preservation of history and the built environment. Monroe is well positioned to expand its market to include those visitors interested in visiting historic places.

Commercial ventures located in downtown should be mindful of this significant market group, and specialty retail, entertainment and exhibits should be marketed specifically for it.

Artists and the Arts Industry

Throughout downtown, the arts can play a significant role in contributing to the cherished character and image that this downtown plan seeks to enhance. Targeting specific areas of downtown to serve this important sector should be considered in maintaining the diversity of retail businesses and services desired by local residents. Gallery spaces and studios that permit artistic fabrication are desirable. Many communities have established specific districts that allow live/work development to provide economically attainable studios and residences for local artists.

Senior Citizens

Services that cater to independent senior citizens, who choose to live within walking distance of downtown, are also encouraged. These include services such as cleaners, drugstores and restaurants, as well as cultural opportunities, community services, churches and medical practitioners. Living downtown could be a very attractive housing opportunity for this market segment.

Urban Dwellers

Nationally, cities of this size are demonstrating that approximately 4% to 6% of area residents would choose to live downtown if high-quality housing were provided, in an enriched environment, with sufficient amenities. People considered “empty nesters”, part-time residents and “young professionals” are among those in this group that should be targeted as potential downtown residents.

The Framework Strategy

With the community's vision for downtown and its key market targets in mind, the following actions constitute the plan framework:

Downtown should be strengthened by providing safe connections for pedestrians by providing an enhanced streetscape, offering adequate parking for both local and visitor traffic, enhancing the visual character and encouraging development of key "opportunity sites." All of this can and should be accomplished while respecting the existing character of downtown. The map on page 51 illustrates this basic strategy.

1. Promote the "greening" of Monroe.

A primary goal is to enhance the character of the streetscape. This will be achieved through the "greening" of the study area, by providing landscape improvements throughout the study area. Street trees will be planted to establish a tree canopy on W. Hill, Blakeley, Lewis, Ferry, Woods, Charles, Ann and Fremont Streets. On Main Street the blocks just west of Madison and east of the railroad will be greened as well. Bump-outs will enhance Main Street between Madison Street and the railroad. On each side of the railroad a double row of trees should be planted; this will visually and physically buffer the tracks edge.

2. Strengthen and expand the downtown.

The Al Borlin Park Neighborhood should be redeveloped to include mixed-use, multifamily/live-work and duplexes/townhomes. As sites become available for redevelopment, land uses and business should expand and complement the existing retail, restaurants and commercial shops that serve local residents and visitors. The School Administration Building and adjacent yard should be redeveloped with a community plaza framed by new and renovated buildings and landscaping.

The Downtown Neighborhood should continue to act as a transitional residential area with converted commercial space. Streetscape improvements should enhance the pedestrian experience with existing street trees being retained.

The Rails and Road Neighborhood should be enhanced with streetscape improvements. There is potential redevelopment for properties along Main Street. Small plazas and pocket parks should act as gateways to downtown.

Key Plan Concepts

These are the key plan concepts:

Downtown as a Destination

Downtown Monroe should expand its role as a regional center. Retail uses, professional offices, cultural, art/entertainment facilities, recreation, support services and residential uses should combine to create an active and diverse downtown. Improved parking and pedestrian linkages should support access to all of these important features and assets.

Land Use Strategy

Main Street between Madison Street and the railroad comprises the traditional downtown core of Monroe, which serves as a destination in its own right. However, expanding this area with increased concentrations of specialty retail, dining and entertainment will position the entire downtown as an exciting place distinct from other locales and as an important destination in the region.

Mixed-use development is a viable tool for stimulating economic diversity. Ideally, mixed-use projects would consist of retail businesses at street level with a variety of professional and housing uses on the upper levels, resulting in additional retail office and residential units in Downtown Monroe.

Many communities face conflicts between encouraging mixed-use developments downtown and existing land use regulations. The existing Municipal Code permits mixed-use developments. However, it allows for light industrial uses, which are in conflict with the vision; therefore, a rezoning or overlay will be required.

Mixed-use development occurs in two forms: vertical and horizontal. Horizontal mixed-use implies that a variety of uses are accessible on a given site or property. For example, a commercial building may be located at the front of a parcel, with a residential structure in the rear. This may also apply to a building that offers a retail business immediately adjacent to a professional office. Vertical mixed-use implies that the uses are “stacked” one on top of the other. The traditional commercial storefront, with retail at the street level and an apartment or office above, is an example currently existing in Downtown Monroe. Both of these types of mixed-use projects would fulfill the vision for diversity in downtown.





Recommended Land Uses:

- Mixed-use development, which integrates commercial, professional office and housing;
- Specialty Arts that permit live/work opportunities;
- Professional offices;
- Arts and cultural facilities; and
- Residential.

Urban Design Systems

Urban design systems, which should be coordinated to achieve the objectives of this plan, include circulation systems for pedestrians, bicyclists and automobiles, as well as street design, public information, parks and public amenities.



The following basic urban design system improvements should be made:

- Enhance the pedestrian experience throughout downtown by extending streetscape elements (streetlights, benches, planters, trash receptacles, transit shelter and bicycle stands) and public improvements beyond the traditional core;
- Expand the current inventory of public parks and gathering places downtown;
- Create a discernible vehicular hierarchy that directs local traffic to public parking facilities and allows “through-traffic” on designated arterials;
- Expand on-street and off-street parking facilities to stimulate construction of other desired uses.
- Establish a cohesive wayfinding and signage system.

Streetscape Improvements

While some streetscape improvements have occurred, in the form of banners and hanging baskets along Main Street, there is a lack of cohesion and identity within the surrounding blocks. In order to assure expansion of the downtown core, pedestrian improvements should occur in a systematic and logical manner. Streetscape elements are typically organized in a hierarchical system to reflect the levels of pedestrian use proposed for specific segments of sidewalks. Street trees, furnishings, public art, lighting and directional signage each contribute to the overall character of the street. Although specific details may vary depending on the street, the primary elements should be consistent.

Streetscape elements can also be used to denote specific neighborhoods within downtown. Color, public art and/or unique streetscape elements can create a distinct character that allows specific neighborhoods to exhibit a unique identity.

Another important consideration in the development of outdoor spaces associated with streetscape activity is the advancement of current technology. Cities throughout the United States are exploring the feasibility of creating wireless hubs in public outdoor spaces. The City of Monroe should explore how best to integrate new technology into proposed streetscape improvements, future public amenities and existing public spaces to encourage diverse activities downtown.

Improved pedestrian connections also should link the downtown to public parking facilities, government offices, and public amenities. In addition, the city should explore providing connections to regional trails and bicycle trails.

Enhancements should include:

- Expanded streetscape improvements along Blakeley, Lewis, Ferry, Woods, Charles, Fremont, and Main Streets;
- Safe and efficient pedestrian connections between downtown neighborhoods, public amenities and public parking facilities;
- Multimodal trail along Al Borlin Park.

Parks and Open Space

Public open spaces are typically a vital component to an active downtown. The downtown lacks a traditional civic plaza to accommodate a wide range of uses. As the city continues to grow and the number and frequency of festivals expands, the city will need a location to serve the needs of the community. A new civic amenity located adjacent to the School Administration Building should be constructed to accommodate a diverse range of venues for activities, events and recreation.

Vehicular Circulation

Each street in Downtown Monroe contributes to the overall development pattern and each should be considered part of a greater whole. Street sections and associated streetscape improvements should be designed to respond to the primary goals contained in the Downtown Master Plan. Streets should not be designed simply to convey automobile traffic, but should be construed as an essential element that contributes to the overall character and image of a neighborhood. Main Street is a key concern; it is a major city arterial as well as the primary retail center.

Automobile system enhancements should include:

- Coordinated long-range planning to accommodate wider sidewalks, on-street parking and bicycle routes/lanes.
- Install pedestrian signals at Fremont and Lewis;
- Install coordinated gateway and directional signage;



- Enhance the formal entrance to downtown by improving the median with more trees along Main Street east of Madison Street;
- Rework the street sections on Lewis at Fremont, Ann and Woods.
- Provide gateway and intersection enhancements as noted in Chapter 10.

Parking

The city and downtown should develop a coordinated system of parking facilities comprised of off-street public parking lots and parking structures. Although on-street parking opportunities and surface parking lots are scattered throughout the downtown, a parking structure would require major public investment. In order to maximize the overall benefits of such a facility, structured parking garages should be managed to promote high utilization during the day and evening hours. Management of parking facilities includes monitoring, fee collection, physical maintenance of the garage and associated pedestrian connections and ongoing marketing and promotions. Additional public parking facilities should be planned in conjunction with key development projects.

Another technique currently employed throughout the country to maximize public investment is to construct multi-use public structures that offer leasable commercial space. “Wrapping” parking structures with retail businesses has proved profitable and the physical impact of a multi-storied parking structure is mitigated by architectural detailing of the storefronts. This could be a viable solution as new large scale development is realized. An additional in-depth analysis should be undertaken to determine the appropriate site for such a structure.

Historic Resources

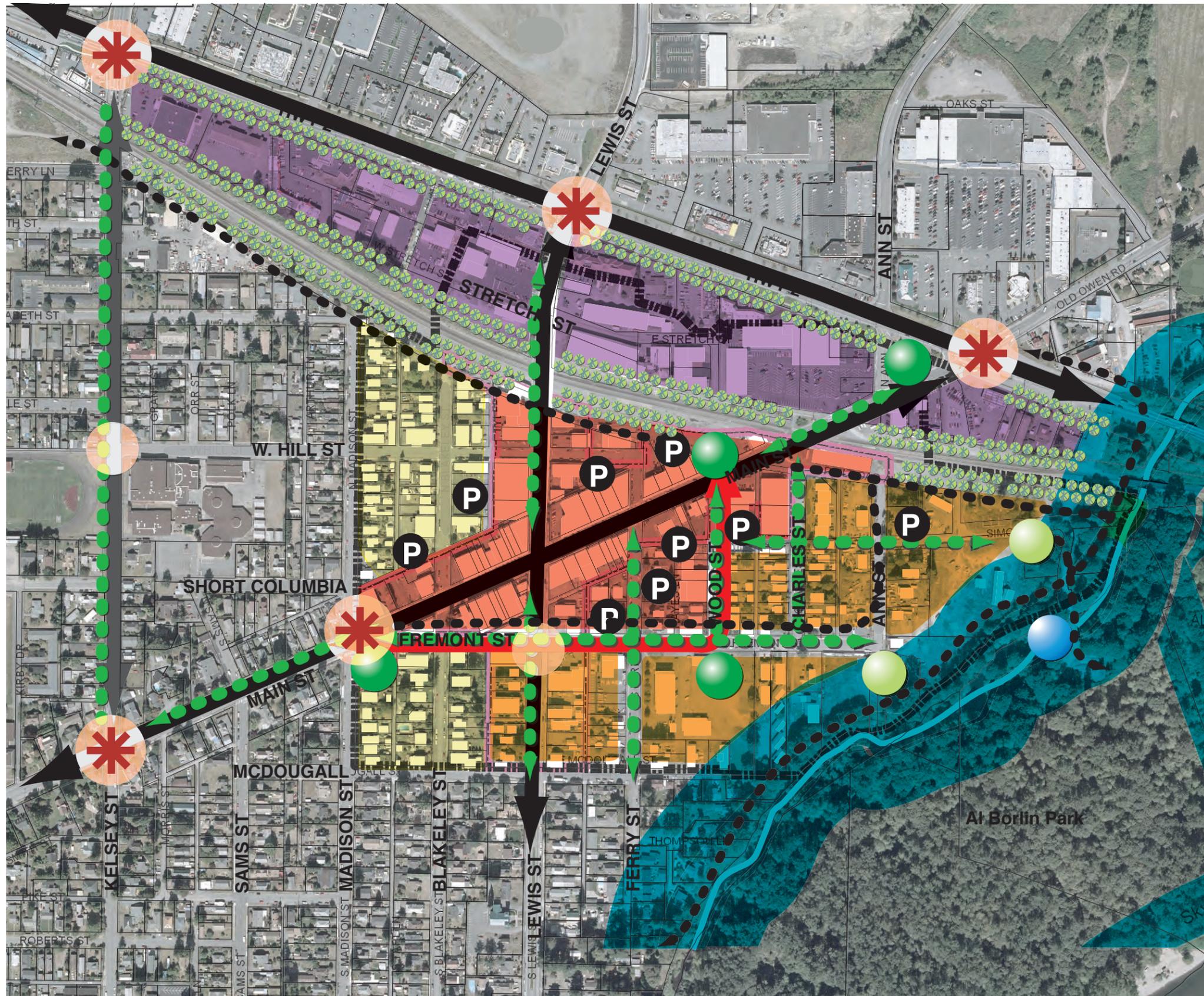
Historic buildings are a major component and should be considered a critical resource that contributes to the character and heritage of the city. In fact, the architectural character of historic buildings is often what developers attempt to recreate in newer retail developments that compete with businesses downtown. Preserving the architectural integrity of historic buildings is a critical component to previous long-range planning efforts. A Historic Preservation Commission and a Historic Preservation Ordinance are two tools that the city should establish to ensure the preservation of historic resources.

The existing inventory of historic structures combined with existing development patterns create a cherished character and image for Downtown Monroe. New development and renovations of existing buildings should mirror established patterns of development. Design Guidelines, which accompany this document, convey the desired intent for new projects, but also allow and promote architectural creativity. Within the historic district, buildings should reflect established architectural patterns exhibited by solid-to-void ratios, setbacks and pedestrian amenities strategically located at street level.

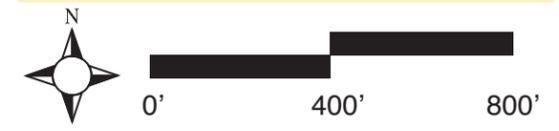
Historic preservation program enhancements should include:

- Develop a heritage tourism program.
- Provide grants and loans for the rehabilitation of historic resources.
- Study the benefits of offering “special valuation” for certain historic properties. This is a program offered by the State of Washington that freezes the property tax for ten years.
- Install interpretive markers throughout the downtown.
- Make use of special historic building code provisions that are available.





Key	
Historic Main Area	
Borlin Park Neighborhood	
Downtown Neighborhood	
Rails & Road Neighborhood	
Green Plaza-Public Art Enhancement	
Park Improvement	
Water Access/Overlook	
Parking Options/Opportunities	
Landscape Improvement	
Enhanced Pedestrian and Bicycle connectivity	
Greenway Improvement	
Gateway Improvement	
Enhanced Intersection	
Primary Auto Circulation	
Conveyor Street	
Secondary Auto Circulation	
Water Resource	
Shoreline	
Study Area Boundry	



City of Monroe, Washington
Downtown Master Plan
Design Framework Map

Winter & Company
 Hoshide Williams Architects
 Urban Advisors
 Mirai Associates
 Reid Middleton

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Historic Preservation

Historic resources make up a key part of Downtown Monroe's character and represent tangible links to the past. The historic buildings that exist downtown are assets that should attract tourists, shoppers, businesses and residents. This potential draw can foster rehabilitation of buildings and support renewed economic activity. This chapter discusses the value of historic resources, and outlines the steps to be considered and undertaken to establish a preservation program within Monroe.

Why Historic Preservation?

Across the nation, thousands of communities promote historic preservation because doing so contributes to neighborhood livability and quality of life, minimizes negative impacts on the environment and yields economic rewards.

Monroe is rich in historic resources and offers an outstanding quality of life. It continues to attract development that challenges the community to seek creative ways of protecting its character and historic resources. These include historic buildings and structures. Preserving historic resources is a part of an overall strategy of maintaining community identity and livability. As Monroe continues to redevelop, a goal is to maintain its ties to the past through the preservation of its architectural heritage reflected in its historic resources.

Preservation of the built environment provides a fundamental link to the past. Many of Monroe's buildings tell its story of unique historical development. Preserving these resources creates a sense of place for residents and provides visitors a connection to this unique heritage.

What does Preservation mean?

- Preservation means using historic properties.
- Preservation means accommodating change.
- Preservation means maintaining key character-defining features.

Preservation does NOT:

- Stop development,
- Require making improvements, or
- Require removing inappropriate changes that have happened.

The values associated with the preservation of historic resources include:

- Providing a link with the past
- Establishing a distinct market image
- Making a building available for occupancy in a shorter time
- Providing an attractive image
- Supporting heritage tourism strategies
- Reinforcing the downtown ambiance

Preservation Program

A preservation program should be established in Monroe. The foundation for a working program requires that the community identify its historic resources, designate them as such, and take steps to protect them from future damage or inappropriate modification. Finally, community policies and regulations should be adopted to ensure that the resources will be preserved.

Resource Identification

Three key concepts are used in evaluation of a historic property: historic significance, historic integrity and historic context. Once a property has been evaluated as significant, it can be designated as a national resource, state resource or local landmark.

Designation of Resources

The *National Register of Historic Places* is the official list of the nation's historic and archaeological resources worthy of preservation. The register is a national inventory to which public agencies as well as private citizens may refer. It contains buildings, districts, historic and prehistoric sites, structures and objects significant on a national, state or local level.

The *State Register of Historic Properties* is a list of the state's significant cultural resources worthy of preservation for the future education and enjoyment of Washington's residents and visitors.

Local Designation is established through the regulatory powers of a city's zoning ordinance. Under state legislation, cities, towns and counties in Washington may adopt local preservation ordinances. Most of these ordinances include a formal process whereby an individual historic property or district can be locally designated.

Regulations Supporting Preservation

One way to protect historic resources is to establish a local preservation ordinance. The purpose of the ordinance is to promote preservation of historic and cultural resources. At the community level, a city's historic preservation ordinance is usually established under the provisions of local zoning regulations. The ordinance may provide a process for designation of historic properties as well as for the review of rehabilitation plans and designs for new construction and demolition. Other legal tools may include preservation easements, covenants and design guidelines. Design guidelines for Monroe are being developed in addition to the Downtown Master Plan. They are under a separate cover.

The ordinances serve two functions: they provide for the designation of significant historic districts and they provide for the maintenance of a district's visual attributes by requiring that all development be reviewed by an appointed board.

Additional Issues and Opportunities

Building Code Compliance

Building codes can have a measurable impact on rehabilitation projects. When extensive rehabilitation work is planned for an older building, it may trigger code compliance actions that increase costs and discourage investment. Complying with some of these code requirements also may have a negative effect on an historic building. For example, an historic door may be too narrow to meet code requirements, but replacing the door with a wider one may damage the detail and trim elements that surround it.

The city's building code officials need some flexibility in interpreting the building code when applied to a property that is officially designated as a historic resource. A basic device for providing flexibility is to employ special sections of the building code that apply to historic properties. This provides some flexibility in code compliance, where life and safety concerns are not compromised.

The city has adopted the 2006 International Existing Building Code (IEBC); Chapter 10 of this document addresses historic buildings.

Preservation Awareness

One of the biggest obstacles to historic preservation is the lack of understanding about what it accomplishes and why it is so important for a community. Two key reasons for historic preservation are:

- To provide a direct link with our past, helping to see how our ancestors lived, worked and played, and
- To reuse or “recycle” historic buildings. The energy used to create a building the first time is not lost through demolition and reconstruction, but rather enhanced through continued use.

Providing the resources and expertise to assist in educating the public about historic preservation should be a primary goal for the city.

A key segment of an educational component is to provide technical training in proper restoration procedures. Property owners and tradespeople need information about renovation procedures and materials that are available to them. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service and nominations are submitted through the State Historic Preservation Officer. This designation does not impose any responsibilities upon a private property owner for maintenance or restoration, but rather can be a source of pride and some tax incentives are available. The city should:

- Provide technical training opportunities
- Conduct “how-to” renovation workshops
- Conduct “hands-on” renovation projects
- Produce technical publications on preservation

Design Guidelines

Design guidelines help preserve historic buildings as records of our heritage in a consistent and fair manner. They provide for unbiased and uniform review of proposed work. They provide standards by which all projects are evaluated, minimizing the influence of individual tastes.

Design guidelines also can establish a climate for investment for businesses, residents and property owners because the associated review process provides assurance that alterations and new construction by others will reinforce the preservation goals of the city.

Guidelines also can serve as educational tools, providing useful information about rehabilitation procedures and design concepts that are appropriate for historic buildings. They often provide practical guidance, helping property owners make well-informed design decisions.

- Adopt the design guidelines for projects in Downtown Monroe.
- Promote compliance with the guidelines through incentives and special permitting conditions.

Heritage Tourism

Heritage tourism should be an important part of the city's economy. Capitalizing on those resources which already exist is relatively easy to do. Developing a "unified image" that lets a visitor know that they are in a special place is the primary goal. Establishing a signs and wayfinding system, as well as marking important historic resources, will help accomplish this goal.

Historic building markers may take on several forms. Permanent plaques describing the significance of a structure may be attached to designated resources. Plaques are a relatively low-cost investment with a high return on visibility and education for present and future generations.

An interpretive marker system—typically including a photograph or drawing—provides additional information about a site and usually is related to a brochure or walking tour guide. These are most effective when they conform to a uniform design that falls within the guidelines of the area and reinforce to the visitor that the area is "special."

- Develop and install interpretive markers
- Integrate the interpretive markers into the City's sign system

Main Street Program

"The Washington Main Street Program helps communities revitalize traditional downtown and neighborhood commercial districts. Revitalization typically involves investment in existing buildings and also involves attracting and supporting new and existing businesses that are often locally owned.

A revitalized downtown also serves as a center piece of community life: a place to shop, invest, recreate and live."

- Establish a Main Street Program

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Pedestrian & Bicycle Circulation

Pedestrian corridors, bike routes and streets should be considered in a broad context and planned as a comprehensive network that strengthens commercial centers and links residential neighborhoods, city services and public amenities. As a component of the circulation system, streetscape design should enhance the pedestrian experience. It also must establish a unifying image, adopting the “Greening of Downtown Monroe Concept.”

Key Principles:

There are five key principles for creating an improved pedestrian and bicycle circulation system with an enhanced streetscape design:

1. Establish a kit of streetscape components to provide a sense of unity throughout the downtown area.

Streetscape elements (e.g., streetlights, benches, waste receptacles, bollards, landscaping) should provide a consistent general image throughout downtown.

2. Enhance sidewalks to establish a sense of hierarchy in pedestrian routes.

A hierarchy of sidewalk designs and streetscape improvements should identify primary and secondary pedestrian routes by developing a design palette of materials and colors where decorative applications are applied to key locations.



Portions of the downtown streetscape have existing enhancements such as pedestrian lighting and plantings.



The pedestrian system includes sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian lighting, benches, waste receptacles, signs and planters.

3. Strengthen the functionality of pedestrian and bicycle circulation systems.

The pedestrian and bicycle circulation system is a complex network of sidewalks, trails, alleys, crosswalks and streetscape elements. These components should be assembled in various combinations along the block, to respond to specific conditions within each neighborhood. Expanding the system's "kit of parts" throughout much of the downtown will strengthen the role pedestrians and bicyclists play in Monroe's economy.

As the pedestrian and bicycle circulation systems are developed they should be closely coordinated with the 2007 transportation plan.

The system should include:

- Plazas, parks and other places to rest and refresh;
- Directional signs and wayfinding devices tailored to the user;
- A series of destinations that make downtown a fun place to explore at all times during the day, week and throughout the year; and
- Providing bike racks in convenient areas to safely store bicycles while cyclists are inside shops and restaurants.

4. Provide trail connections to and from the downtown core for pedestrians and bicyclists.

The city has several multi-modal trails, both existing and planned; connections to these trails should be provided. The city should place a higher priority on improvements that would link downtown to nearby neighborhoods. Also of particular importance are the trails linking downtown to existing and future regional trail networks.

Recommended improvement actions:

- Provide clearly defined pedestrian links between downtown neighborhoods;
- Connect to local and regional systems, such as the Centennial Trail;
- Install signage and directories as important parts of a local regional trail system;
- Potential trail connections could occur at locations noted on the map that follows.

5. Coordinate bicycle circulation as a system.

Just as streets provide different levels of service for automobiles, e.g., arterials, collectors, local streets, etc., bicycle travel-ways should be organized in a similar system. For example, bike routes may function as a part of the general circulation system, while others may serve as commuter routes or as recreational amenities.



Trail Connection Diagram



Existing streetscape features in Downtown Monroe.

Streetscape Strategy

In recent years, the city has enhanced a portion of Main Street by installing specialty paving, pedestrian lighting, furniture and street trees. This has established a distinct and attractive image for a limited section of the area. Expansion of the retail core is a goal of the Master Plan and an expanded program should be considered throughout the area.

The hanging baskets, planters and planted medians have enriched the landscape component of the streetscape. This green quality helps to create a distinct identity. The green theme should be continued, using a variety of techniques to introduce trees, flowers and ornamental plantings. Green elements should serve as the visual continuity throughout the expanded downtown area. In addition, decorative paving designs should be used to highlight certain pedestrian walks.

Note that there is an interaction between streetscape concepts and the design of street cross-sections for traffic and parking. Illustrations that relate to some of the streetscape recommendations that appear in text in this chapter are included in Chapter 7, following, which addresses auto circulation and parking.

The Streetscape Palette

A few elements of a potential streetscape design kit already exist downtown, and these should form the base for a coordinated palette. The key components are:

Street Lights

The city should expand the use of decorative streetlights throughout the downtown plan area. The existing decorative luminaires' features include:

- Fluted metal shaft (standard), painted dark green
- Ovoid lamp (luminaire) with metal cap and strap frame
- Cross arms for supporting hanging baskets

Note that lighting technologies are continuing to change, as cities seek greater energy savings and efficiency while also working to reduce glare and minimize light scatter into the night sky. For this reason, the metal cap is a good feature; in addition, the lens in the street light should have a "refracting" feature to help direct light downward.

Street Trees

Street trees should be installed where space allows. These can occur in tree grates or in a planting strip. Where sidewalks are at least nine feet wide on Main Street, trees may be installed in metal grates along the edge. In other areas where the sidewalk is too narrow, or there is substantial pedestrian congestion, they should be installed in bulb-outs at corners and in shallow bump-outs at mid-block locations.

At a minimum, a mix of two or three species should be used in an alternating pattern, to provide variety in seasonal color and to mitigate impacts of any potential attack by pests that could damage one species. Species should be selected with the advice of an arborist, and should be ones that help to convey an association with the history of the community.

Benches

Benches should be installed in small plazas, at expanded sidewalk bulb-out areas and continued throughout the planning area.

Planters

Planters should be used in mid-block locations as well as where benches are installed. A rounded “pottery” design, which has been installed in some locations, should be continued.

Waste Receptacles

Trash containers should be installed near bench locations and continuously placed throughout the planning area.



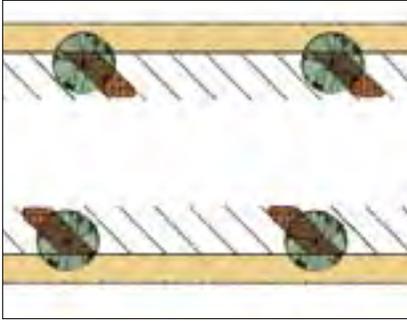
Trash containers should be installed near benches.



Street furnishings and street trees should be carefully located to enhance designated pedestrian corridors.



Existing streetscape features in Downtown Monroe.



A mid-block bump-out could be used to accommodate a tree planting.

Sidewalks

Providing safe and convenient pedestrian access in downtown Monroe is an extremely important objective. While many improvements have been installed downtown, additional improvements are necessary, especially in the Al Borlin Park Neighborhood and other areas of downtown. There are instances where sidewalks do not exist, and others are too narrow, or are in need of repair. The city should assess the public right-of-way in this area and create an inventory of required improvements.

Enhance major pedestrian routes within the Downtown area.

Apply the hierarchy of sidewalk paving designs to define pedestrian routes.

Use on-street parking to buffer pedestrians from auto travel lanes.

Apply parallel and diagonal parking layouts as conditions permit. Refer to the Automobile Circulation chapter for a more detailed description and preferred locations for on-street parking.

Install improvements and amenities in response to increased levels of pedestrian activity.

New sidewalk widths should be sized to accommodate the level of use that specific land uses typically generate. In addition, sidewalk improvements will depend on right-of-way width, street configuration, parking needs and other factors.

Decorative paving should be used strategically, to denote special places, such as intersections, pedestrian crossings, public plazas and areas containing public benches and other furnishings. The decorative paving designs depicted in the following sidewalk typologies are illustrative only, but do convey the intent of a decorative paving system. Final design and materials should reflect the design character of Monroe.

The existing sidewalks on Main Street are as narrow as 9 feet in some areas, which can be sufficient for sidewalk and tree grates, if pedestrian volumes can be managed. A small, shallow mid-block bump-out that uses a small portion of a parking space (leaving enough of the space to accommodate a compact vehicle) could also be used to accommodate a tree planting.

To help guide pedestrian activity in and around the downtown, two types of sidewalk designs are recommended. One has decorative paving while the other does not. This hierarchical typology provides for a range of improvements from basic scored concrete to ornamental accents, paving, furnishings and decorative pedestrian lighting.

Type I Sidewalk

This sidewalk has a band of concrete pavers at the outside edge of the walk. The remainder of the walk is finished concrete, scored in modules of 24 inches or less. Pavers would also be installed at special seating areas and at corner or mid-block locations.

Key features:

- Ornamental pavers at the sidewalk edge of the sidewalk, abutting the curb;
- Concrete bands (curb and gutter) on street side of pavers, when feasible;
- Street trees and ornamental tree grates;
- Pedestrian lighting;
- Street furnishings such as benches, planters, waste receptacles and bicycle racks; and
- Public art

Type II Sidewalk

In this classification, the sidewalk is constructed entirely of traditionally scored concrete. Ornamental pavers would be installed only at special seating areas or corner landscape features. These sidewalks can be detached from the curb and separated by a landscaped planting strip or attached to the curb with a concrete curb and gutter.

Key features:

- Traditionally scored concrete;
- Pedestrian lighting;
- Street furnishings such as decorative lights, benches, waste receptacles and bicycle racks.

Bulb-outs

A special device for sidewalk expansion is the “bulb-out,” in which a portion of the sidewalk is widened to extend into the area occupied by a parking lane. Often this expansion is positioned at an intersection, where a portion of the parking lane is prohibited, for safe turning radius and visibility.

These expanded areas provide space for additional street furniture and planting. They also improve pedestrian crossing safety because the distance that a pedestrian must cross from curb to curb is reduced.

Bicycle System Improvements

There are three types of bicycle circulation ways that should be employed in the downtown. These include special lanes designated for cyclists, as well as places where bicyclists would share the road with motorists. These three types are:

Bike Routes

These are roadways in which bicyclists share the travel lane with automobiles. They typically occur in the central core of a downtown. Ideally, the travel lane is wide enough so that motorists have room to safely pass bicyclists. Designating bike routes within the downtown area is encouraged.

Potential street configurations presented in Chapter 7 allow bicyclists to mix with automobiles, which is often more desirable in high density urban areas. A study conducted in Palo Alto, California provides some insight into the dynamics of safety for bicyclists in urban settings:

- Traveling against traffic carries a much greater accident risk than traveling with traffic.
- There is a 1.8 times greater risk between bicyclists and autos when bikes travel on a sidewalk rather than on a street.
- Bicycling on the roadway in the same direction as adjacent traffic, whether or not bicycle lanes are designated, is not associated with increased accident risk for any group.

Commuter-based and recreation traffic is well suited to bicycling. This is a recommended practice for those living within a minimum 15 to 20 minutes walking distance of work or recreation (3/4 to 1 mile radius). It is further recommended that employees be provided bike racks downtown.

Recommended for: Fremont, Woods or Ann

Bike Lanes

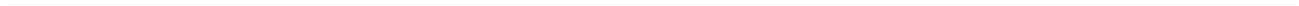
These are paved ways reserved for bicyclists, but constructed as part of an auto roadway. Typically, a bike lane is defined by a painted stripe and signs.

Recommended for: Portions of Main

Bike Trails

These are improved paths designed for bicycle use that are separated from automobile roadways. While separation from pedestrian corridors is desirable, bicyclists may share these trails with pedestrians when space limitations or cost constraints dictate. These typically link parks and open space systems.

Recommended for: Borlin Park and along the railroad right-of way.



7

Auto Circulation & Parking

Parking use and automobile circulation has been a main topic of many discussions about Downtown Monroe. Citizens are concerned that high traffic volumes should not compromise pedestrian safety and comfort. Other concerns relate to the adequate availability and convenience of public parking facilities with future redevelopment.

Circulation

Because of the diversity of activities conducted in Downtown Monroe and periods of congestion along regional routes auto circulation is a major concern. Traffic has increased notably along two primary downtown routes—Main and Lewis Streets. Some residents and business owners believe that the increase of visitors downtown positively impacts the local economy, while others consider the traffic, especially high-speed “through traffic”, detrimental to the desired character and ambience of a “historic” downtown. Traffic congestion does have the potential to discourage pedestrian use. Pedestrian safety and convenient automobile access to downtown must be coordinated to ensure a pleasant and safe experience for both pedestrians and drivers.

In order to ensure that residents and visitors continue to frequent Downtown Monroe, automobile access must be efficient and convenient.

Monroe faces several important transportation issues:

- A lack of distinct gateways and directional signage creates confusion for the first time visitor coming to downtown;
- Streets providing primary access to downtown are also used to convey traffic from one edge of the city to another - typically referred to as “through traffic”; and
- Downtown Monroe lacks coordinated bicycle routes and many commercial areas do not provide safe and secure bicycle storage areas.





Conveyor Route

In many downtowns, congestion occurs along one or two major routes. This is true in Monroe along Main Street and Lewis Street. At the same time, the existing street system may have underutilized roadway segments that could provide relief to these congested routes. The most attractive option is Fremont Street.

Developing a conveyor route along Fremont Street would provide an alternate route through Downtown Monroe as well as provide access to anticipated redevelopment in the Al Borlin Park Neighborhood. See illustrations on page 74 and 75 for route location.

Going from west to east, the conveyor route would start at the Fremont and Main Street intersection following Fremont Street, which would turn north along Woods Street, where it would reconnect to Main Street. Along this route, a new traffic signal at the Fremont/Lewis Street intersection would facilitate traffic, pedestrian and bicycle connections within the corridor. In order to maintain good traffic flow along Lewis Street, the traffic signal would replace the “free” left turns at the Lewis/Main Street intersection with controlled left turn movements at Fremont Street. The need for turn lanes and proposed bicycle facilities along Fremont Street would require removal of some on-street parking. Depending on the final design of this route, Fremont Street may need to be reclassified to a higher use facility.

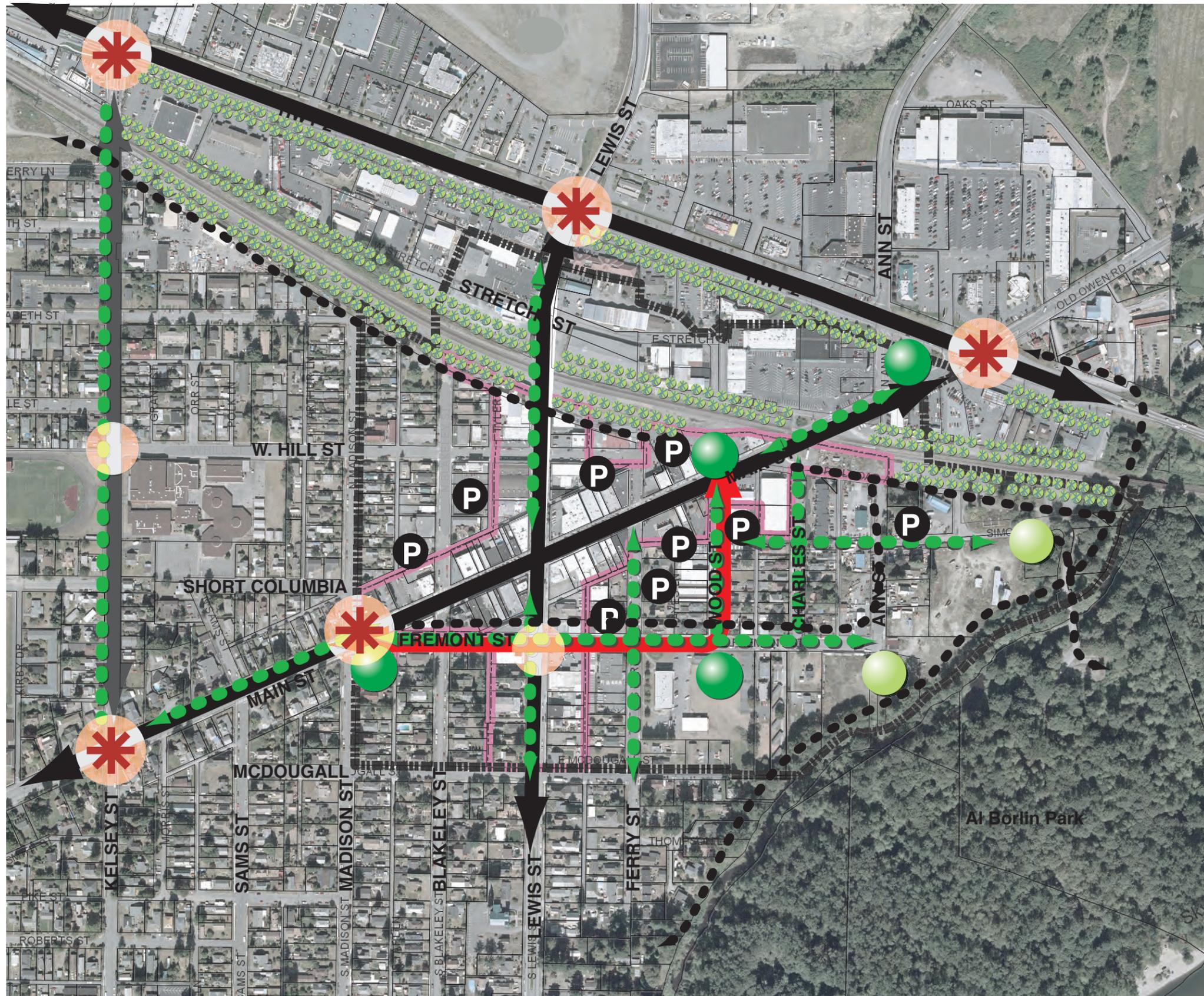
One-Way Couplet

Several options were examined to improve traffic circulation. One option is to create an east-west, one-way street system using Fremont, West Hill, and Main Street. However, a one-way couplet could not be effectively implemented because of the diagonal traffic flow on Main Street and the difficulty of connecting the ends of a one-way system within the residential neighborhoods on each side of downtown. A one-way street system is also contradictory to the traffic calming and urban design objectives embodied within the downtown plan.

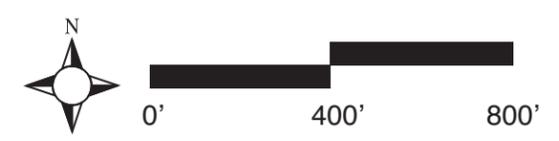
Roundabouts

A roundabout (a small traffic circle) is an option for some intersections. The roundabout concept at the intersection of Fremont and Main Street would likely require some realignment of the existing T-intersection and possible acquisition of right-of-way. Because existing buildings front both sides of Main Street at this intersection a relatively tight urban roundabout design would be required, as would the close proximity of the adjacent Madison / Main Street intersection.

A roundabout at the Woods / Fremont Street intersection could be accomplished with a single-lane. The design would likely require right-of-way acquisition along each corner, but with limited impacts to existing buildings



Key	
Parking Options/Opportunities	P
Landscape Improvement	
Enhanced Pedestrian and Bicycle Connectivity	
Greenway Improvement	
Gateway Improvement	
Enhanced Intersection	
Primary Auto Circulation	
Conveyor Street	
Secondary Auto Circulation	
Study Area Boundry	



City of Monroe, Washington Downtown Master Plan Circulation Map

Winter & Company
 Hoshide Williams Architects
 Urban Advisors
 Mirai Associates
 Reid Middleton

Main Street

Main Street, between Madison Street and Railroad Avenue, is the active commercial core of downtown; the majority of historic commercial buildings line this busy street. A combination of on-street parallel and diagonal, parking serves the businesses. On-street parking, combined with pedestrian foot traffic, which tends to slow automobile traffic, ensures that traffic speeds along this segment of Main Street are minimized.



On-street parking serves both local employees and visitors in Downtown Monroe.

Heavy vehicular traffic at the intersection with Lewis Street creates backups along Main Street, especially during the peak periods. The City addressed this congestion by restricting left-turns from Main to Lewis Street during the peak periods. This action was a recommendation of the *SR 203 Pilot Study: Corridor Concept Plan* (PSRC, December 2004). To the east of Railroad Avenue and West of Madison Street, traffic speeds tend to increase due to the decrease in commercial density and subsequent lack of pedestrian activity.

Although the implementation of turn restrictions and other actions (such as one-way couplet circulations and peak period parking restrictions) are often used to improve vehicular traffic flow, additional remedies for relieving congestion are also available. One viable option is to establish a “conveyor route” around the intersection of Main and Lewis Street. This route would utilize Fremont and Woods Street as an alternative through downtown.

Intersection of Fremont and Main Street

Treatment at the intersection of Main and Fremont Street may take the form of a roundabout or rechannelization of lane configurations along Main, Fremont and Blakeley Streets. A roundabout provides an opportunity for developing a gateway on the west side of downtown. In addition to the conveyor route, left-turn movements at the intersection at Main and Lewis Street may need to be prohibited in order to allow more vehicles through the intersection.

Recommended improvements for Main Street include:

- Establish left-turn restrictions for all approaches at the intersection of Main and Lewis Street;
- Redesign the intersection of Main, Fremont and Blakeley Streets by rechanneling lane configurations or constructing a roundabout;
- Enhance the intersection of Main and Lewis Street (see intersection A page 97);
- Locate directional signage strategically to direct visitors along the conveyor route and to activity centers, amenities and civic services; and

Two options for improvements to the intersection of Main and Fremont should be tested:

Potential Alternative A would install a roundabout at the intersection of Main and Fremont Street, see the figure below.

Issues:

- Some on-street parallel parking will be removed.
- Additional right-of-way may be needed for roundabout construction.

Assets:

- The roundabout provides an opportunity for a gateway on the west side of downtown.
- The combined visual and physical change in the road structure would prompt slower speeds and provide a signature intersection along Main Street.



Potential Alternative B depicts a rechannelization of the lane configurations at the Main Street intersections at Blakeley Street and Fremont Street. Fremont Street at Main Street would be changed to a one-way in the eastbound direction up to Blakeley Street where it returns to a two-way operation. At the intersection of Main and Blakeley Street, the northbound direction would separate out a left-turn pocket, and the intersection would have an all-way stop control, see the figure below.

Issues:

- One-way street operations tend to encourage higher speeds, although this is a short one-way section.

Assets:

- Rechannelization is relatively inexpensive because it requires only restriping of lanes.
- On-street parking opportunities are increased along the one-way section of Fremont.



Lewis Street

Lewis Street is part of the state's transportation network, State Route 203, connecting US 2 in Monroe to the towns of Duvall and Fall City to the south. It is the major north-south route through downtown. Between the railroad tracks and Fremont Street, Lewis Street serves the active commercial core of downtown. Many of the downtown commercial buildings line this busy street. A combination of on-street parallel parking and small off-street lots serves the businesses in this area. On-street parking, combined with pedestrian foot traffic, ensures that traffic speeds along this segment of Main Street are minimized.

As previously mentioned under the Main Street description, congestion occurs at the intersection with Main Street especially during the peak periods. To the north, the railroad crossing can create backups into this intersection when a train crosses. Also, the queues for the north and southbound left-turns onto Main Street can create intersection delays. The proposed new traffic signal at Lewis Street / Fremont Street would need to be coordinated with the traffic signal at Main Street in order to maintain good traffic movements.

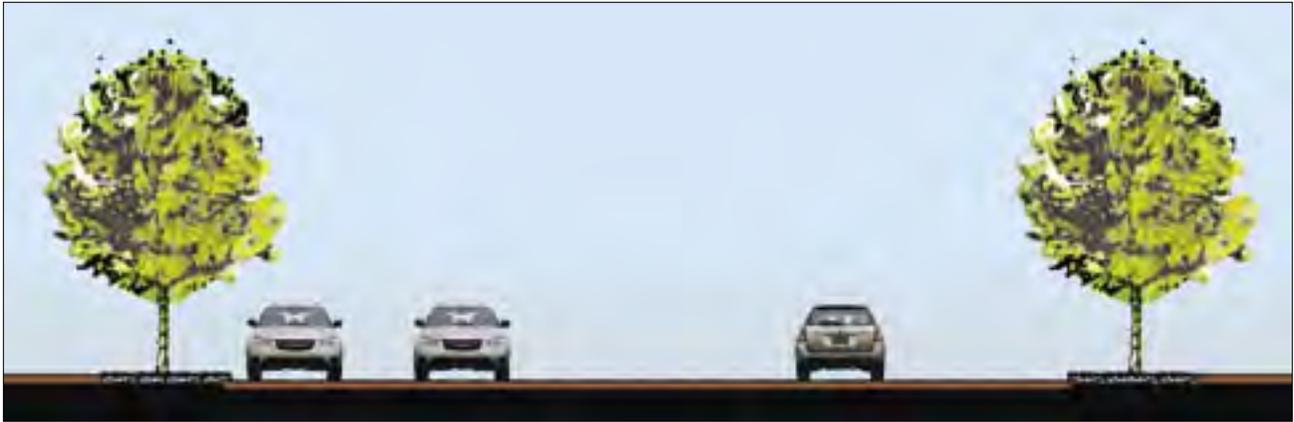
The *SR 203 Pilot Study* recommended curb bulbs at the intersection of Hill Street and Lewis Street to improve pedestrian safety. This action is consistent with the Downtown Master Plan and is included within the recommendations.

To the south of McDougall Street, traffic speeds tend to increase due to the decrease in commercial density and subsequent lack of pedestrian activity.

Recommended improvements for Lewis Street include:

- A new traffic signal installed at the Fremont and Lewis Street intersection including left-turn pockets for the east and westbound movements;
- Left-turn restrictions for all approaches at the intersection of Main Street and Lewis Street to facilitate the traffic flow along Lewis Street and to coordinate with the new signal at Fremont Street (Note: currently there are left turn restrictions during the PM peak period along Main Street at this intersection. The recommendation would add left turn restrictions to Lewis Street. These turn restrictions could be in place throughout the day or during peak periods only);
- Directional signage strategically located to direct visitors along the conveyor route and to revitalized neighborhoods, civic amenities and civic services; and
- Curb bulb-outs installed. Bulb-outs would occur at Hill Street, Main Street and Fremont Street. Bicycle lanes are not designated nor provided on Lewis Street so the bulb-outs will not create a conflict for bicycles.
- Street trees installed and maintained.

Lewis Street Proposed Alternative A



7'	7'	8'	12'	12'	12'	8'	7'	7'
<i>Sidewalk</i>	<i>Planting Strip</i>	<i>Parallel Parking</i>	<i>Travel Lane</i>	<i>Center Turn Lane / Median</i>	<i>Travel Lane</i>	<i>Parallel Parking</i>	<i>Planting Strip</i>	<i>Sidewalk</i>
80' ROW								

Proposed Alternative A depicts two travel lanes, a center turn lane, two lanes of parallel parking, and two planting strips along the sidewalks. Assuming an 80' right-of-way, the street cross-section would be as follows:

T	Travel lane width	12' - 0"
TL	Turning lane / median width	12' - 0"
P	Parallel parking width	8' - 0"
PS	Planting strip width	7' - 0"
S	Sidewalk width	7' - 0"

Assets:

- Wide sidewalks allow room for streetscape amenities;
- Large planting strips facilitate significant increase of greenery; and
- Generous lane sizes and turning lane facilitate traffic flow.

Fremont Street

Fremont Street currently provides local access to the southern side of Downtown Monroe. Pedestrian and vehicular traffic is lower than Main Street and a mix of residential, business and industrial uses are scattered along this street. The Monroe School Administration Building is accessed from Fremont Street. The building is located at the corner of Fremont and Ferry Street.

Although Fremont Street contains several established business, the density and configuration of existing development does not actively draw pedestrians from Main Street over to Fremont.

Increased densities of infill and redevelopment on both sides of Fremont and in the Al Borlin Park Neighborhood would result in increased pedestrian activity and a demand for additional on-street parking.

Additionally, identifying Fremont Street to absorb the overflow of “through” traffic along Main Street would draw more vehicles to the southern half of downtown. Refer to the “Main Street” section for intersection treatments at the intersection of Fremont and Main Street.

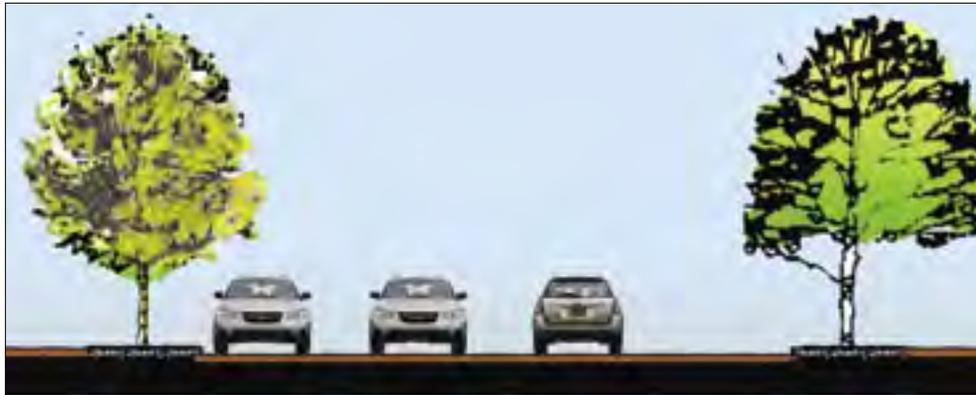
Left-turn restrictions at the intersection of Main and Lewis Street would attract more vehicles to the intersection at Fremont and Lewis Street. The increase in traffic would necessitate a new traffic signal at this intersection for safer vehicle and pedestrian crossings. Left-turn pockets would be added for the east and westbound traffic. Due to the limitations of the existing street right-of-way, up to eight on-street parallel parking spots would be taken.

Fremont Street has also been identified as a bicycle route to connect Main Street with the Al Borlin Park Neighborhood and to regional bicycle facilities along US 2.

Recommended improvements for Fremont Street include:

- Rechannelization to provide for turn lanes
- Signing to designate Fremont as a shared bicycle facility
- A new traffic signal installed at Fremont and Lewis Street intersection including left-turn pockets for the east and westbound movements;
- Removal of selected on-street parking spaces to allow for the rechannelization
- Directional signage strategically located to direct visitors along the conveyor route and to revitalized neighborhoods, civic amenities and civic services
- Street trees installed and maintained.

Fremont Street Proposed Alternative A



7'	5'	8'	10'	10'	8'	5'	7'
<i>Sidewalk</i>	<i>Planting Strip</i>	<i>Parallel Parking</i>	<i>Travel Lane</i>	<i>Travel Lane</i>	<i>Parallel Parking</i>	<i>Planting Strip</i>	<i>Sidewalk</i>
<i>60' ROW</i>							

Proposed Alternative A depicts two travel lanes, two lanes of parallel parking, and two planting strips along the sidewalks. The street cross-section would be as follows:

T	Travel lane width	10' - 0"
P	Parallel parking width	8' - 0"
PS	Planting strip width	5' - 0"
S	Sidewalk width	7' - 0"

Issues:

- Does not support bicycle traffic.

Assets:

- Large planters provide for pedestrian separation from traffic and significant additional greenery.

Fremont Street Proposed Alternative B



10'	8'	10'+	5'	10'+	8'	10'
<i>Sidewalk w/ Tree in Grate</i>	<i>Parallel Parking</i>	<i>Travel Lane</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Travel Lane</i>	<i>Parallel Parking</i>	<i>Sidewalk w/ Tree in Grate</i>
60' ROW+						

Proposed Alternative B depicts two travel lanes, two rows of parallel parking, sidewalks with tree grates and a planted median. The street cross-section would be as follows:

M	Median width	5' - 0"
T	Travel lane width	10' - 0" +
P	Parallel parking width	8' - 0"
ST	Sidewalk / tree grate width	10' - 0"

Issues:

- Does not support bicycle traffic.
- The city may need to acquire additional ROW to achieve a 10' sidewalk/treegrate width.
- The travel lane width may need to be adjusted to meet the International Fire Code 503 to accommodate a median design.

Assets:

- Median provides for increased greenery.

Fremont Street Proposed Alternative C



10'	8'	14'	14'	8'	10'
<i>Sidewalk w/ Tree in Grate</i>	<i>Parallel Parking</i>	<i>Shared Travel / Bike Lane</i>	<i>Shared Travel / Bike Lane</i>	<i>Parallel Parking</i>	<i>Sidewalk w/ Tree in Grate</i>
60' ROW+					

Proposed Alternative C depicts two shared travel / bike lanes, two rows of parallel parking, and sidewalks with tree grates. The street cross-section would be as follows:

T/B	Shared travel and bike lane	14' - 0"
P	Parallel parking width	8' - 0"
ST	Sidewalk / tree grate width	10' - 0"

Issues:

- The city may need to acquire additional ROW to achieve a 10' sidewalk/treegrate width.

Assets:

- Enables bicycle traffic along the conveyor street; and
- Larger shared lane enables larger vehicles to travel along conveyor street.
- This section would require an additional 4' of ROW.

Ferry Street and Ann Street

A couple of businesses are located on streets between Fremont and Main Street. Currently the majority of the land abutting these streets is single-family residential and industrial. In the future, these streets will provide a mix of uses.

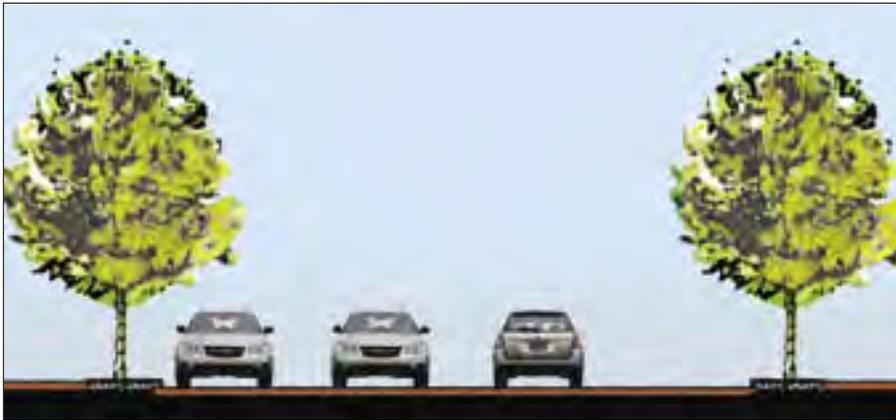
On Ferry Street, the existing street section, combined with one-way operations, encourages higher speed traffic. In the past, a fire station was located on the block between Main Street and Ferry Street and necessitated a one-way operation along this block. The fire station no longer exists. If land uses, street operations and parking configurations on Ferry Street are altered to accommodate denser development, two-way operations and increased on street parallel parking, then Ferry Street would be transformed to become a local access street. An interim solution is also noted below.

On Ann Street between US 2 and Main Street a proposal has been put forth to change this section of roadway to a one-way system. There don't appear to be any significant issues here. Although Ann Street is a truck route for vehicles on US 2 going east bound to west bound on Main Street, so this would need to be accommodated. That may impact the angled parking on Ann Street that is shown in the proposal.

Recommended improvements could include:

- Convert one-way operations to two-way on Ferry Street
- Convert angled parking to parallel parking on both sides of Ferry Street (Note: This would result in a reduction of approximately five parking spaces);
- Locate directional signage strategically to direct visitors along the conveyor route and to revitalized neighborhoods, civic amenities and civic services; and
- Install and maintain street trees.
- An interim option to address the Ferry Street configuration before it converts to a two-way street would be to provide a one-way street northbound. This could potentially address late afternoon traffic concerns and retain the on-street parking while the city/ DREAM work towards establishing an off-street parking facility and/or management system. This could cause an increase in traffic on Woods and Blakely.

Ferry / Ann Street Proposed Alternative A



10'	8'	10'	10'	8'	10'
<i>Sidewalk w/ Tree in Grate</i>	<i>Parallel Parking</i>	<i>Travel Lane</i>	<i>Travel Lane</i>	<i>Parallel Parking</i>	<i>Sidewalk w/ Tree in Grate</i>
55' ROW+					

Proposed Alternative A depicts two travel lanes, two lanes of parallel parking, and sidewalks with tree grates or planting strips. The street cross-section would be as follows:

T	Travel lane width	10' - 0"
P	Parallel parking width	8' - 0"
ST	Sidewalk / tree grate width	10' - 0"
	or, Sidewalk /planting strip	11' - 0"

Issues:

- The city may need to acquire additional ROW to achieve a 10' sidewalk/treegrate or 11' sidewalk/planting strip width.

Assets:

- Provides additional on-street parking; and
- Two way travel may slow traffic.

Woods Street

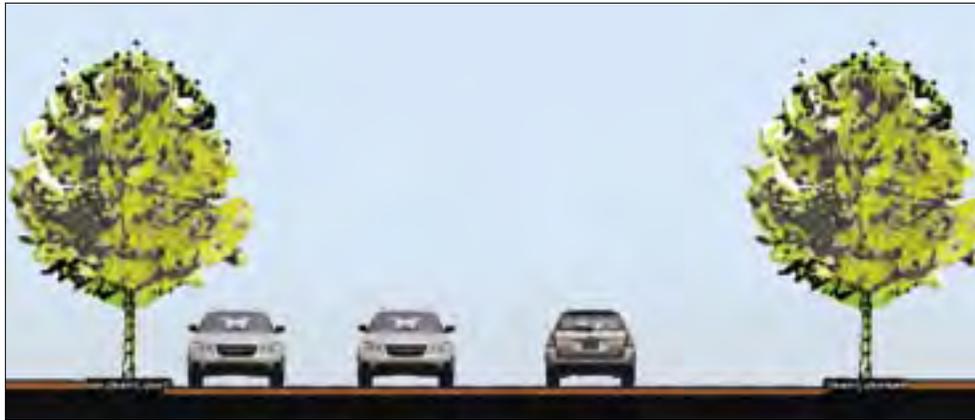
Woods Street contains a variety of land uses including residential, commercial and light industrial. Like Ferry Street, Woods Street transitions from commercial and industrial at Main Street and becomes residential towards Fremont Street. Established homes line Woods Street on the south end.

Existing traffic along Woods Street is relatively low. With congestion occurring at the intersection of Main and Lewis Street, a conveyor route for “through” traffic has been identified to go along Fremont Street via Woods Street. Woods Street also provides direct access from Main Street to the Al Borlin Park Neighborhood. With the anticipated redevelopment of the neighborhood, Woods Street becomes an even more important access route.

Recommended improvements for Woods Street include:

- An all-way stop or roundabout installed at Woods and Fremont Street intersection;
- Directional signage strategically located to direct visitors along the conveyor route and to revitalized neighborhoods, civic amenities and civic services;
- Street trees installed and maintained

Woods Street Proposed Alternative A



<i>10'</i>	<i>8'</i>	<i>12'</i>	<i>12'</i>	<i>8'</i>	<i>10'</i>
<i>Sidewalk w/ Tree in Grate</i>	<i>Parallel Parking</i>	<i>Travel Lane</i>	<i>Travel Lane</i>	<i>Parallel Parking</i>	<i>Sidewalk w/ Tree in Grate</i>
<i>60' ROW</i>					

Proposed Alternative A depicts two travel lanes, two lanes of parallel parking, and sidewalks with tree grates. The street cross-section would be as follows:

T	Travel lane width	12' - 0"
P	Parallel parking width	8' - 0"
ST	Sidewalk / tree grate width	10' - 0"

Issues:

- Does not support bicycle traffic.

Assets:

- Wide travel lanes facilitate traffic movement.

Woods Street Proposed Alternative B



10'	8'	14'	14'	8'	10'
<i>Sidewalk w/ Tree in Grate</i>	<i>Parallel Parking</i>	<i>Shared Travel / Bike Lane</i>	<i>Shared Travel / Bike Lane</i>	<i>Parallel Parking</i>	<i>Sidewalk w/ Tree in Grate</i>
60' ROW +					

Proposed Alternative B depicts two shared travel / bike lanes, two lanes of parallel parking, and sidewalks with tree grates. The street cross-section would be as follows:

T/B	Shared travel and bike lane	14' - 0"
P	Parallel parking width	8' - 0"
ST	Sidewalk / tree grate width	10' - 0"

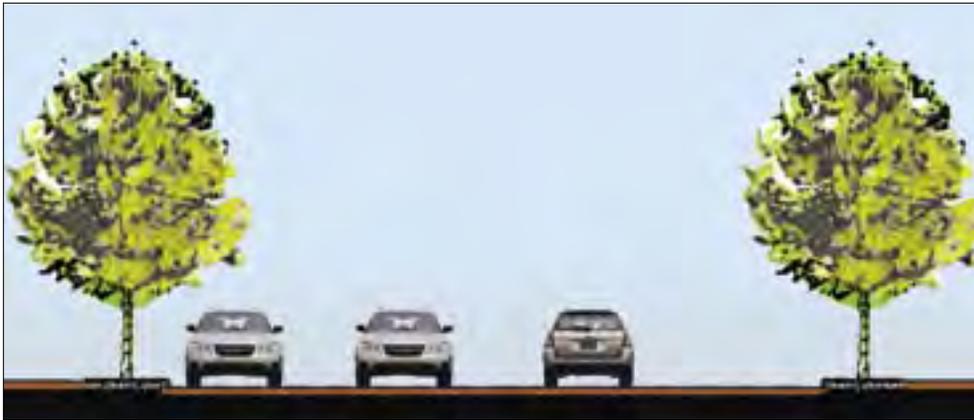
Issues:

- The city may need to acquire additional ROW to achieve a 10' sidewalk/treegrate width
- Also, as an alternative bike lanes could be used, although the city may need to acquire additional ROW to achieve this configuration

Assets:

- Enables bicycle traffic along the conveyor street.

Charles Street Proposed Alternative A



<i>10'</i>	<i>8'</i>	<i>10'</i>	<i>10'</i>	<i>8'</i>	<i>10'</i>
<i>Sidewalk w/ Tree in Grate</i>	<i>Parallel Parking</i>	<i>Travel Lane</i>	<i>Travel Lane</i>	<i>Parallel Parking</i>	<i>Sidewalk w/ Tree in Grate</i>
<i>56' ROW</i>					

Charles Street

Proposed Alternative A depicts two travel lanes, two lanes of parallel parking, and sidewalks with tree grates or planting strips. The street cross-section would be as follows:

T	Travel lane width	10' - 0"
P	Parallel parking width	8' - 0"
ST	Sidewalk / tree grate width	10' - 0"
	or, Sidewalk /planting strip	11' - 0"

Issues:

- Does not support bicycle traffic.
- The city may need to acquire additional ROW to achieve a 11' sidewalk/planting strip width.

Charles Street Proposed Alternative B



10'	8'	14'	14'	8'	10'
<i>Sidewalk w/ Tree in Grate</i>	<i>Parallel Parking</i>	<i>Shared Travel / Bike Lane</i>	<i>Shared Travel / Bike Lane</i>	<i>Parallel Parking</i>	<i>Sidewalk w/ Tree in Grate</i>
60' ROW +					

Proposed Alternative B depicts two travel lanes, two bike lanes, two lanes of parallel parking and sidewalks with tree grates or planting strips. The street cross-section would be as follows:

T/B	Shared travel and bike lane	14' - 0"
P	Parallel parking width	8' - 0"
ST	Sidewalk / tree grate width	10' - 0"
	or, Sidewalk /planting strip	11' - 0"

Issues:

- The city may need to acquire additional ROW to achieve a 10' sidewalk/treegrate or 11' sidewalk/planting strip width.

Assets:

- Allows for separated bicycle lane.

Parking

In addition to the issues related to traffic volumes and speeds, public parking is an important piece of the transportation puzzle. Parking is a vital business function that must be preserved for existing businesses as well as enhanced to support additional business activity as Downtown Monroe continues to grow. The vision set forth in the Master Plan is to improve parking and business access over time. Variables to consider are the current number of spaces available, the convenience of their location, the ability of prospective users to locate available spaces and the policies and enforcement used to manage turnover. While there are many available existing public parking spaces, background data suggests that they are not conveniently located within traditionally acceptable walking distances, 1200-1350 feet, or 5 minutes.

In addition, on-street parking also serves both local employees and visitors. Both diagonal and parallel parking configurations exist, depending on location and the width of the public right-of-way.

Public Parking Facilities

In general, there are three basic types of public parking facilities that may be considered in Downtown Monroe: off-street surface lots, on-street parking spaces and parking structures. Each type of facility has features that are appropriate for different applications, depending on the existing and/or proposed land uses and development densities.

Types of Parking Facilities

Surface lots are paved parking facilities that vary in size. Downtown Monroe does not have any public off-street parking facilities. Private lots are scattered throughout the downtown and serve specific buildings and/or adjacent public facilities. Typically, surface lots are constructed as a cost-effective interim measure in areas where such a use is not disruptive to adjacent landowners and where property values and development pressures are low.

On-street parking is currently accommodated by a combination of parallel and diagonal parking. On-street parking is desirable in those areas seeking to improve and/or expand pedestrian activity. In addition, on-street parking also acts as a traffic control device because it requires vehicular traffic to slow down to allow for access into and from parking spaces.

Parking structures generally have two to four levels of parking with at least one ingress and egress point. Also, many communities are now requiring parking structures to be “wrapped” with retail and/or office space in order to maximize land efficiency and improve the streetscape.

Parking Goals:

- Minimize the visual and physical impact of structured parking facilities
- Identify an efficient and effective location for a public parking structure
- Provide adequate employee parking facilities
- Maximize on-street parking opportunities
- Ensure that off-street surface parking lots do not fragment existing and desired development patterns.

Throughout the chapter recommendations have been made to improve automobile circulation. To address this measure parking spaces will be lost because of the conversion of diagonal parking to parallel parking and there is also a loss of spaces where turn restrictions are addressed. The loss these spaces is not an issue since the area currently utilizes only 55% of the downtown parking spots. Better management of the existing spaces should be established to allow for shoppers and diners to use the prime spaces.

Parking Supply and Demand

A parking survey was conducted in downtown Monroe in September 2007. The survey results, shown in Table 1, indicate that the peak parking demands utilize only 55% of downtown's parking spots. The parking demand peaked around midday and stayed relatively constant through the 6:00 PM hour. When the data were broken down by geographic location, the southwest portion of downtown had the highest occupancy rate, 78%, followed by the northwest area, 68%. The northeast portion of downtown had the lowest occupancy rate with 40%.

Table 1: Existing Peak Parking Occupancy

Location	Existing Supply Total	2007 Survey Demand	Occupancy
NW	130	88	68%
NE	200	79	40%
SW	73	57	78%
SE	190	101	53%
TOTAL	593	325	55%

While the survey showed that overall, downtown Monroe has ample parking supply, there are several blocks of on-street parking that are relatively full during peak afternoon shopping hours. These locations include the core of downtown along Main Street, much of N. Ferry Street, and the segments of Blakeley Street, Lewis Street, and Fremont Street in the vicinity of Main Street. The survey also examined parking turnover and found that most vehicles were moved within the prescribed time limits.

A recent parking utilization study included a count of spaces occupied on a typical work day and found that, in most cases, sufficient parking spaces do exist. Near the intersection of Lewis and Main, spaces were near a level of use considered at maximum. This indicates the popularity of this location, and suggests that some improvements are needed. At the same time, spaces a block away were underutilized.

Even with parking use at capacity, the first response should not be construction of new parking facilities.

Typically, the first step in addressing parking use should be to seek better use of existing spaces. This may include coordinating private lots to permit some public use, signing public lots to be more easily identified, and setting parking time limits and/or fees to encourage turnover. It also should include programs to aggressively persuade employees to park farther away from their jobs to yield close-in spaces for customers.

Then, streetscapes should be enhanced to encourage motorists to walk an extra block to their destination. With more attractive sidewalk designs, and with a greater intensity of uses along the way that invite walking.

Third, efforts to reduce the demand for new spaces should be addressed. This includes strengthening public transit, making bicycle and pedestrian routes more convenient and combining land uses that can share parking throughout the day.

After these efforts have been pursued to the optimum, then construction of additional parking facilities may be scheduled. It is likely that, initially, such a facility will be a new surface lot, because the up front costs are substantially less than a parking structure.

In a community the size of Monroe, for example, the cost of creating a parking space in a structure can be expected to cost four times that of a surface lot. Therefore, it is likely that a surface lot will come first. Even so, a site should be selected that has a dimension which will accommodate a structure in the future. Ideally, this will have a dimension that accommodates an efficient structure layout and also provides space for a “wrap” of other uses that are desired downtown, which will help to activate the street edge.

There are some conditions that could accelerate the phasing of a parking structure however, if the community feels strongly that the benefits of a structure are worth the added investment early in the plan implementation process, then an improvement district may be created, in which property and business owners contribute to its cost. This can help to create sufficient supply to attract other investment into the area, which can help to defray the costs as well.

A dilemma about providing parking in a community this size is that, from a market standpoint, it is difficult to grow past land values that only support surface parking. Constructing surface parking lots reduces the density of buildings and erodes the character of the street edge, which discourages pedestrian activity. It also weakens the synergy that results when a mix of uses occurs in a higher density. In most cases, small cities must decide at a POLICY level that structured parking is the appropriate solution, and make the extra effort to finance it. In this way, the community can pursue the density it seeks while providing adequate parking close-by.

Another means of accelerating the cycle to a parking structure is to include a civic use in the project. For example, a downtown community center/ performance space could be developed that would include a parking structure.



Future Parking Demand

Upon review of proposed development densities for the opportunity sites and other infill and development opportunities, there is projected need for 100 to 200 additional parking spaces within the downtown area. This considers the loss of some parking spaces by converting from diagonal to parallel parking configurations on Ferry Street and includes potential displacement of existing parking spaces by reconfiguring lanes on Fremont Street.

It is important to avoid “over parking” the downtown. General parking standards are typically based on suburban models such as office parks, shopping malls, commercial strip centers and large multifamily residential developments, which are inappropriate for downtown. There have been several studies of parking in traditional “main street” environments that have concluded that parking spaces needed for commercial and retail mixed-use conditions require, generally on the upper end, no more than 2.2 spaces per 1000 square feet. This has been taken as low as 0.7 spaces/1000 sq. ft. (Portland, OR), but that is in an area that is served by one of the more robust transit services in the nation. The parking evaluation done earlier in this section resulted in an average commercial parking demand of approximately 1.8 to 2.0 spaces/1000 sq. ft. This parking demand is consistent with the existing survey results and is on the low end of the demand based upon the ITE data. Therefore, there is the potential that the parking demand will increase as the downtown commercial areas grow and become more successful.

Parking Issues and Opportunities

How future new parking facilities are developed is an important element of the Downtown Master Plan. There are a number of considerations that should be factored into parking planning and development.

- **Think of parking as a utility** (i.e., it provides a service that customers use) and not as a land use. Viewing parking from this perspective makes one ask the question of “where should parking be located to best serve demand?”
- **Take a systems approach** to viewing parking decisions. This requires that all parking structures, lots and on-street spaces be evaluated holistically: how is the current demand being accommodated? A systematic approach will evaluate how well the facilities are functioning, and if the public seeks out alternative parking facilities when individual sites are full. In addition, privately owned surface lots should also be evaluated to explore potential for shared parking. Security and lighting must also be addressed. Surface parking facilities in dark and/or foreboding places will not be readily utilized by employees who must return to their vehicles after dark during the winter months.
- **Combine other uses with new public facilities** whenever possible. Multiple-use parking facilities that include parking are desirable because they typically are more attractive than just a single-use parking facility. They are desirable from the public’s point of view because the public can often park closer to their destination. They are also desirable for the developer, because a combined-use property can generate higher rental income than a standalone parking structure. In addition, the top story of a parking garage, if uncovered, can also serve as a location for civic functions. This outdoor space typically offers great views of the downtown and of the City, depending on the topography.
- **Locate new public parking facilities** where they will serve the broadest range of users.
- **Ensure that new public facilities have enough spaces** to meet the expected demand created by nearby retail and commercial businesses and also assist in fulfilling increased needs during special events.

-
- **Ensure that public redevelopment projects have sufficient parking** to meet their needs as well as additional opportunities for public parking. When public projects would displace parking, such as in the case of the concepts set forth in Opportunity Site C, an equal or greater supply of workable parking must be made available.
 - **Manage parking resources** to ensure parking turnover and to capture revenue.

Recommended Actions

As the Downtown Master Plan is implemented, the need to address future parking needs will arise. The plan identifies the future need for 100 to 200 additional parking spaces within downtown. The timing and location of these spaces will depend on various factors influencing development patterns. When the need for additional off-street parking becomes evident in Downtown Monroe, the following concepts should be considered:

1. Develop parking structures and surface lots to service all areas of downtown.

Parking near the downtown core would benefit a diversity of user groups including locals seeking government services, patrons of retail and dining opportunities, downtown employees, cultural and civic events and tourists. Since a surface lot will most likely be provided first because of the costs associated with a structure, the site selected for the lot should have a dimension which will accommodate a structure in the future. Ideally, this will have a dimension that accommodates an efficient structure layout and also provides space for a “wrap” of other uses that are desired downtown.

2. Coordinate a wayfinding and sign system that directs visitors and locals to parking lots.

Clearly identify routes to parking that minimize potential conflicts with primary pedestrian routes.

3. Require specific site design elements to screen and buffer parked cars and automobile lights from pedestrian corridors.

See City of Monroe Downtown Design Standards.

4. Confirm the distribution and quantity of projected parking needs.

Additional parking will be needed downtown as development densities increase. The estimates of required new parking need to be refined as individual development and redevelopment plans are submitted. In addition, the City should make a concerted effort to reduce or mitigate impacts on individual businesses that may result from a loss of parking spaces due to implementation of a private development project or any of the public development concepts contained in the Downtown Plan.

5. Develop a Parking Management System.

Parking should be viewed and managed as a “utility” that is provided by the City, and supplemented by private entities that directly benefit from the system. It should be regularly inventoried, managed and monitored. Shared parking should be considered as a better way to effectively use under utilized parking spaces.

6. Revise parking regulations for the Al Borlin Park Area .

The Downtown Commercial area does not require parking for commercial uses. This should be revised to address the demand that will be realized as the Al Borlin Park Area redevelops. Parking requirements should be adopted to address the increased density that is envisioned there. As noted earlier in the plan, there have been several studies of parking in traditional “main street” environments that have concluded that parking spaces needed for commercial and retail mixed use conditions require up to 2.2 spaces per 1000 SF, this ratio is recommended for this area. The existing commercial and residential parking standards for Monroe should be used for similar types of development in this area.

Transit

Community Transit provides transit service for the City of Monroe. Two routes serve Downtown Monroe. Route 271 provides local service throughout the weekend and weeknights to the communities along US 2 between Everett and Gold Bar. During the weekdays, route 275 provides local service to Everett. Route 270 does not deviate off US 2 and travels just north of downtown, providing service between Everett and Gold Bar during the weekday. The Monroe Park and Ride is located west of downtown, next to the Evergreen State Fairgrounds. This facility provides a transfer point for connecting to the Route 424 service to Downtown Seattle.

Transit Opportunities

Public Transit can easily help with full utilization of existing parking and transit facilities. Increased service and shorter headways could encourage greater use of transit to and from Downtown Monroe. Currently, service headways are set for one hour throughout the day and on weekends. On the weekends, a shuttle service between the Park and Ride and downtown could promote greater usage of an under utilized transit facility and reduce the parking demand in Downtown Monroe.

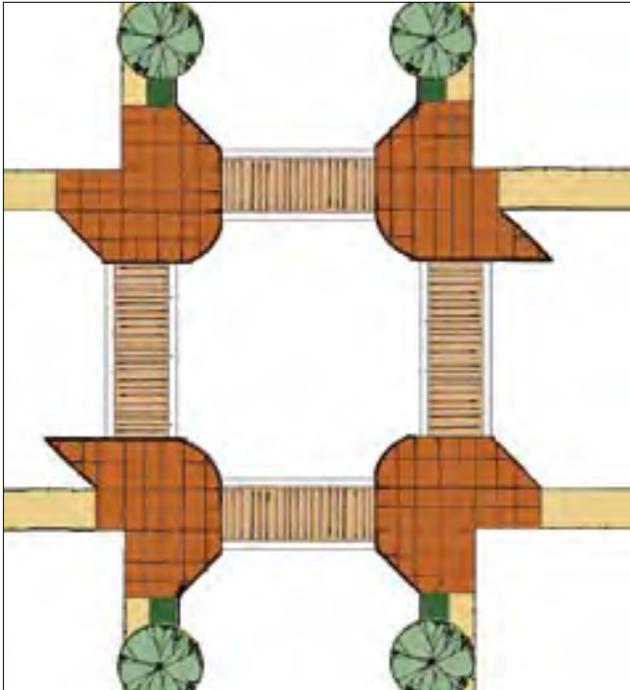
This shuttle service would logically serve both downtown and the North Kelsey planned development, as a way to maximize the opportunities for shopping and other activities in Monroe.

Crosswalks and Intersections

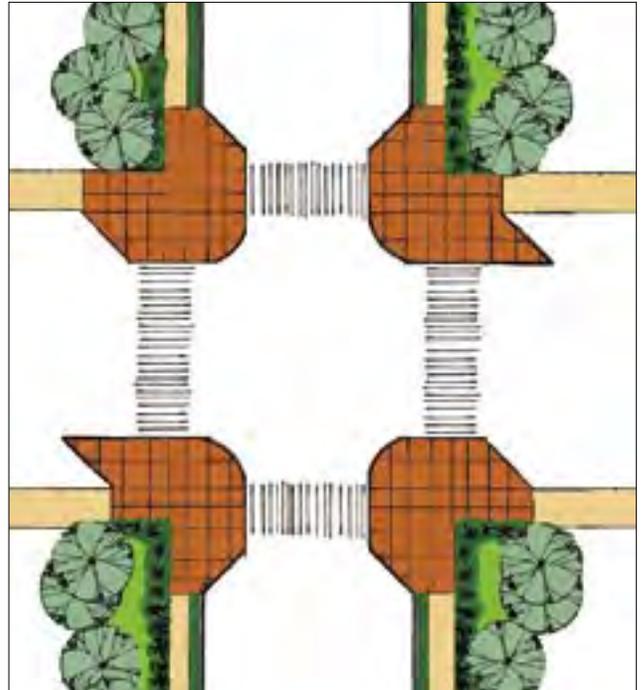
Safe street crossings are essential for an active pedestrian-oriented environment. Crosswalks should be clearly identified and ample space should be provided to allow groups of pedestrians to cross. Crosswalks should be integrated with intersection curb, gutter and handicap ramps to ensure that on-street parking does not impair visibility of pedestrians and on-coming vehicular traffic.

Improved pedestrian safety, enhanced sidewalks and pedestrian corridors combined with directional signs often reduce traffic congestion and relieve demand for on-street parking spaces.

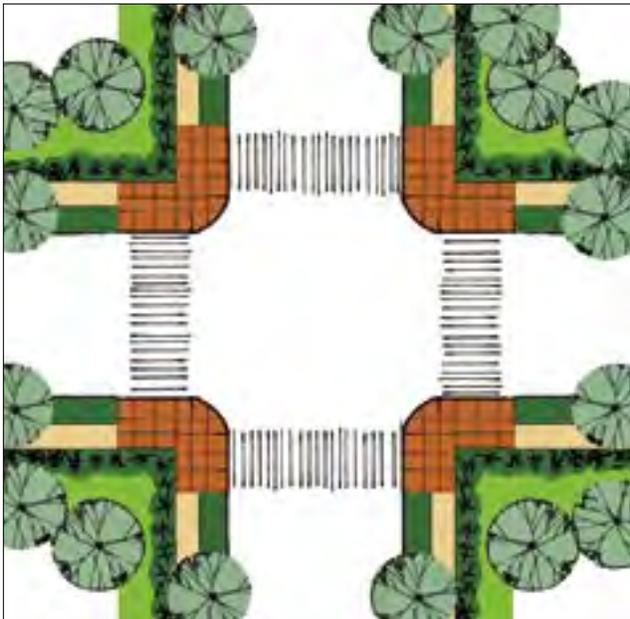
When streetscape improvements are designed and constructed, crosswalks and intersections must facilitate accessibility for people with different types of disabilities and/or impairments. Intersection improvements and crosswalk paving systems need to be designed to facilitate safe pedestrian crossing for the visually impaired. Traffic circles may increase the number of lane and median crossings required and should be carefully studied to ensure that accessibility issues are adequately addressed. All controlled intersections and pedestrian-activated crossings in the downtown area should be clearly delineated using both physical and audible signalization systems.



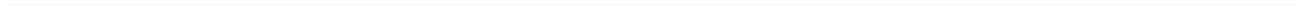
Intersection A



Intersection B



Intersection C



8

Infrastructure

Basic elements of streets, curbs and gutter, drainage, water and electricity are essential parts of the infrastructure that supports uses downtown. Any future development in the area is dependent upon adequate service in terms of these utilities. This chapter provides recommendations for improvements to basic engineering systems for water distribution, sanitary sewer, and stormwater management that serve the downtown sub-area. These improvements should be planned to stimulate development in the area that reinforces the concepts for land use set forth in the overall plan.

Capital Facilities

A description of the City of Monroe's water, sewer and stormwater facilities serving the downtown sub-area is presented in this section. This summary is based upon information provided in the Capital Facilities Element of the City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan 2005-2025. As well as a review of a series of City of Monroe Geographic Information Systems (GIS) maps depicting the water, sewer and stormwater systems, and review of the current zoning map and the city's comprehensive plan.

The review materials provide only a limited amount of information on the size, age, condition, and type of pipes in the water, sewer and stormwater facilities. Additional investigation and background data may be needed in some cases.

Water System

The City of Monroe purchases its water from the City of Everett via three connections to Everett's Transmission Line No. 5, supplied with high quality water from Lake Chaplain and Spada Lake. This main transmission line has a capacity of 50 million gallons of water per day.

The City of Monroe owns and operates the city's water storage and distribution system. The majority of the distribution system is in good condition as reported in the City's Draft Water System Plan. In 2001, a 12-inch water main was installed on the south side of W. Main Street. The grid system distributing water in the downtown sub-area is comprised of older (> 50 years) asbestos-cement pipes ranging from a diameter of 4 inches to 6 and 8 inch water lines. Replace-

ment of approximately 100,000 feet of asbestos-cement pipe in the downtown has been identified by the city as an important capital improvement. Pipelines with a minimum 8-inch diameter should be used in the updated water system to allow for future growth. The water supply and distribution facilities must be of good quality design and construction, commensurate with the quality development within downtown. A systematic replacement program of undersized and old portions of the water system in the downtown should be undertaken in coordination with redevelopment projects including streetscape improvements. Water system improvements should be designed for phased construction with priorities given to those projects which could piggy-back with downtown redevelopment projects and street reconstruction projects. City adoption and construction of capital improvement projects detailed in the Draft Water System Plan is an important step towards implementation of the Downtown Monroe Sub-area Plan.

Fire protection must be served by the water system to all commercial and residential areas, in accordance with the Washington Surveying and Ratings Bureau and the International Fire Code. The fire department indicated that there is adequate water pressure and supply for fire suppression in the downtown sub-area even if the area is redeveloped with more intensive uses. The city's minimum fire flow pressure of 20-psi is required for new structures. The city also requires a backflow prevention assembly for fire systems in commercial buildings and businesses located in a building with multiple units or suites.

Sanitary Sewer

The City of Monroe owns the gravity sanitary sewer serving uses in the downtown sub-area. According to the City's Waste Water Treatment Plan, the sanitary sewer pipelines are a mix of clay, asbestos concrete and PVC. The clay pipes are likely to be near the end of their serviceable life. The sewer lines under Main Street were replaced in 2000. A systematic replacement program of the clay pipes should be undertaken. Ideally, replacement and upgrades should be fully coordinated with other infrastructure improvements (i.e., replacement of old water lines) as well as streetscape enhancements. In addition, to replacing older pipelines, the city should pursue the overall goal to separate stormwater conveyance from the sanitary sewer system.

City sanitary sewer should be provided for all existing development and proposed redevelopment areas within the downtown sub-area. Replacement of sanitary sewer lines should be designed to permit gradual investment approximately paralleling actual needs. The collection system should be primarily planned as a gravity system, with minimal lift stations. Minimum pipeline diameters must meet state

and local design criteria with a minimum size of 8-inches diameter recommended. Pipeline replacement projects that can piggy back with downtown redevelopment projects or street reconstruction projects should be given priority.

Stormwater Management

The City of Monroe also owns and maintains the storm sewer system in the downtown sub-area. Generally, the storm runoff from the downtown core area along Main Street is directed to the alleys and then is sent to the city's waste water treatment facility. Stormwater run off on McDougal drains directly into Woods Creek. The stormwater system in the downtown area is combined with the sanitary sewer pipeline and is comprised of clay, concrete and PVC.

There are currently no known capacity problems within the downtown sub-area, although the design capacity of the system is not known. Future development that results in additional discharge to the system should include an evaluation of the existing system to determine required improvements. Future improvements may require water quality treatment prior to release. The city is completing a drainage improvement project to install a storm drainage main from Lewis Street to Ann Street along Stretch and Butler Streets.

Utilities

A description of the electrical, natural gas, solid waste management and recycling services available in the downtown sub-area is presented in this section. This summary is based upon information provided in the Utilities Element of the City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan 2005-2025.

Electricity

The Snohomish County Public Utility District #1 (PUD) provides electricity for the City of Monroe. The electrical power distribution system in the downtown area is primarily above ground lines. The existing electrical network is capable of providing continuous electrical service to all of the customers in the downtown sub-area. Distribution feeders transmit power to the downtown area from both the Woods Creek and West Monroe substations. Since the majority of the lines are overhead, additional capacity can be added if required, with little or no major system changes or modifications planned. The construction of new electrical lines in the city is now required to be done with underground wiring. Street lighting in downtown is a combination of lights owned and maintained by either the city or the State and the PUD. Some upgrading of the street light wiring is planned by the city.



Generally, the storm runoff from the downtown core area along Main Street is directed to the alleys and then drains by gravity into Woods Creek.



Since the majority of the electrical lines in the downtown are overhead, additional capacity can be added if required, with little or no major system changes or modifications planned.

Natural Gas

Natural gas is provided by Puget Sound Energy (PSE). Extension of natural gas service is based on customer requests followed by a financial analysis to determine if revenues from an extension will offset the cost of construction. Although there are no identified capacity issues in the downtown sub-area, new gas facilities to serve the easterly portion of the planning area would be needed. New lines would be located within existing public right-of-way or on easements on private property. Coordination of any system improvements with other infrastructure construction trenching in the right-of-way should be followed.

Solid Waste Disposal & Recycling

Waste Management is currently under a five-year contract (extending into 2008) with the City of Monroe to provide both residential and commercial garbage collection, as well as, recycling of certain materials. The city requires all residential uses to pay for recycling services. Recycling services are not required for commercial uses.

9

Public Places

Providing public amenities and facilities that accommodate different types of activities is essential to the vitality of Downtown Monroe, especially if it is to serve as an active place for residents, employees and visitors. This chapter provides recommendations for development of new public amenities and enhancement of existing facilities that serve the many user groups targeted for downtown, including a network of major formal open spaces and other informal ones.

Providing places for the community to hold celebrations, stage special events and enjoy the outdoors is an essential ingredient for Downtown Monroe. Downtown should offer public places for special events, festivals and recreation. Providing additional public open space is an important first step to realize this goal. In addition, Downtown Monroe needs indoor facilities to accommodate meetings, dances and family celebrations. These resources will complement a broader collection of public facilities in the community.

A new outdoor public space will soon be available as a part of the North Kelsey development. This public plaza will serve a certain part of the community's needs, but it is not centrally located to the downtown core. As suggested previously, the downtown area needs more, indoor and outdoor spaces specifically designed for formal and informal activities.



Providing places for the community to hold celebrations, stage special events and enjoy the outdoors is an essential ingredient for Downtown Monroe.



Many successful events are orchestrated downtown, including:

- Monroe Fair Days Parade (end of August)
- Light Up Monroe (Christmas tree lighting ceremony)
- Plays and musical theater productions

Other events occur at the Fairgrounds (Snohomish County property surrounded by Monroe):

- Annual Chamber Auction (November)
- Evergreen State Fair
- Equestrian Events
- Car, truck, motorcycle, ATV racing (including NASCAR)
- Antique, arts & crafts shows
- Antique & classic car shows
- Dog and Cat shows
- Rodeo
- Annual Northwest Sportsman Show



Additional events around town include:

- Annual Community Awards
- Lake Tye Fishing Derby
- Plays and musical theater productions
- Movies Under the Moon
- Monroe Summer Festival (3 days)
- 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament
- Monroe Egg Hunt (April)
- Parks & Rec Summer Nights Series

Public art installations should be strategically located to serve as accents in the community, such as at gateways into the downtown or at focal points in public parks



Public plazas provide a place for meetings and performances.

Some of these events could extend venues downtown, animating downtown streets.

Parks, plazas and open spaces should be provided downtown:

- A large civic park for organized events that contains a combination of elements such as trees, seating, public art and lighting;
- Passive green space with lawn areas to serve existing and future downtown residents;
- Small outdoor plazas associated with public/private developments for use by employees and/or residents;
- A Farmer's Market facility to allow for year-round operation and sales of local produce and crafts;
- Pedestrian walks along the edge of Woods Creek that provide direct visual access to the water and offer alternative, safe access between Activity Centers; and
- Neighborhood park or tot lot for picnicking and play.

There are other public facilities that would enliven downtown and serve the community at large. A place for meetings and performances is an example, as is a community recreation center. There are sites within the proposed Al Borlin Park Neighborhood that would be well-suited for these types of amenities.



Entrance to Al Borlin Park.



Provide an overlook opportunity along the proposed pedestrian trail.





Small pockets of public space should occur along the street that may include outdoor eating areas, transit stops and small landscaped parks or plazas.

Parks

Al Borlin Park

Al Borlin Park is an important asset to downtown. It is over 90 acres in size and includes picnic and barbeque areas, fishing spots, trails and extensive natural areas. The park is located between Woods Creek and the Skykomish River. The park should provide greater trail connectivity, internally and externally to their trail systems, and include the construction of small plazas or overlooks to take advantage of scenic views. The trail system should connect into the downtown area and regional system with the capability for pedestrian and bicycle travel. Portions of the trail should expand around the edge of the park along the top of the bank adjacent to proposed new housing in the Al Borlin Park Neighborhood. Wayfinding signs from the Historic Main Street Area should guide locals and visitors to the park. The city also should consider constructing a park overlook at the east end of Fremont Street to serve as a “node” along the trail system that would provide a direct connection to the park from the neighborhood.

Small Plazas and Pocket Parks

Small pockets of public space should occur along the street that may include outdoor eating areas, transit stops and small landscaped parks or plazas. Some recommended locations are at key intersections, which are identified on the Framework Map on page 51.



This street in Boulder, Colorado is designed to be closed for special events and for Farmer’s Market days. Decorative paving invites pedestrian use.



Small pockets of public space should occur along the street that may include outdoor eating areas, transit stops and small landscaped parks or plazas.

Festival Lots

In a community the size of Monroe, it is sometimes difficult to justify allocating dedicated large tracts of land for outdoor public space, when the demands on its use vary substantially throughout the year. A creative means of addressing this problem is to design a space to have multiple functions. For example, an area could be developed to be used as a parking lot during regular business days, but could be converted for use as a Farmer’s Market on weekends. This type of flexible space is termed a “Festival Lot.”

It can be designed as a plaza, or even a parking street. The basic concept is to install decorative paving that will invite use, and to provide utility connections for use by vendors and performers.

For Downtown Monroe, a potential site is the playing field presently part of the School Administration building. While the central portion of this lot should continue to be a green space, it may be possible to design a part of the lot as a plaza. Alternatively, the bordering streets could be improved with utility hookups, decorative lighting, and a special accent paving to emphasize the role that this land plays in the revitalization of downtown.



A large sculptural fountain serves as a place marker in a public place.

A festival lot can promote multiple uses in a flexible public space. This type of feature can serve primarily as a fully functional surface, but may be closed-off for special events. Special paving and bollards often delineate the boundaries of festival lots. They frequently include landscaping at the edge to provide shade for the events and power supplies at key locations. At event times, festival lots are closed to traffic and transform into public gathering space for special events such as markets, concerts or other festivals.

Art Installations

Public Art

Public art installations should be strategically located to serve as accents in the community, such as at gateways into the downtown or at focal points in public parks. Sculptures that the public can interact with are desirable, to create a memorable experience.

Streetscape Art

Public art installations should be designed as integral components of the streetscape. In such cases, an artist would “customize” or re-interpret conventional features of a streetscape with a beautification of design. For example, an artist might design a special decoration for public planters, in coordination with a landscape architect and a civil engineer to create an aesthetically pleasing and functional item. Several cities have commissioned local artists to create unique benches through streetscape art programs. These are models for a Monroe program.



A band stand serves as a bus shelter in a multi-purpose lot.

10

Wayfinding & Public Signs

Downtown Monroe currently has a strong base of local users as well as seasonal tourists and visitors. Many first-time visitors do not know how to get to downtown or where individual destinations are located once they do arrive. Although some signs are in place which direct visitors from US 2 into downtown, there is no cohesive directional signage system for wayfinding in Monroe. In addition to finding the location of individual services, it is important for users to be able to locate public parking and government services easily. Presently, signs to public off-street parking are limited in number. Downtown Monroe would benefit from a professionally developed, graphic signage palette. A coordinated and attractive citywide signage system would greatly aid both downtown entities and other local facilities and attractions.

Wayfinding

A wayfinding system is one of the most cost-effective investments for downtown, in that it can help to establish a strong sense of identity, while also helping users find and then operate in the area. By presenting information in an orderly, sequential manner, people are able to find resources that they need. It also conveys that downtown is a “place,” with special features that contribute to its identity.

The system should convey a consistent graphic style, such that signs in it are readily identified. At the same time, it should have some flexibility in its design, such that different themes of information can be conveyed. For example, a special logo may be applied to signify the locations of the different neighborhoods within downtown.

A wayfinding system should be installed in increments. It is easy to budget portions of it each year in a capital improvement program, and also to add other signs when new facilities come on line. For example, when a new parking facility is constructed, then the appropriate signs should be added that will fit within the overall wayfinding system.



Wayfinding signs should convey a consistent graphic style.

Note:

A recent Sports Brand Analysis recommends that Monroe focus on promoting extreme sports as a distinct theme. The streetscape system should accommodate elements that would convey this theme, but in itself, the streetscape system must convey a wider mix of things and appeal to local residents as well as sports tourists. That is, the wayfinding graphics package should be broader than sports.

At the same time, it should provide a means of incorporating sports-related themes, as appropriate. For example, street lights should have an armature that can hold banners. These banners can convey a variety of messages, including sports-related images.

Tourism Strategy

A Tourism Strategy, developed in 2007, provides many specific recommendations for improving public signs and for integrating them into landscape designs for key intersections and gateways. This includes an analysis of specific signs around downtown and its entry points. These are good recommendations and these concepts are further developed here in the downtown plan. As more specific gateway and wayfinding designs are developed during implementation of the plan, the information provided in the Tourism Strategy should be revisited.

Wayfinding Strategy

Many visitors traveling along US 2 may not be aware of the location of downtown and may have difficulty locating the commercial core. Newcomers to outlying neighborhoods may also be unfamiliar with the area. Once visitors have arrived into the city center, directional signage should easily orient first-time visitors and guide them to services and local points of interest.

The few wayfinding signs that do exist fail to convey a distinct image for downtown. A new signage system is needed to convey information, and to reinforce the special identity of Downtown Monroe. Note that signs that are developed for US 2 and Lewis must be approved by the Washington State Department of Transportation, but nonetheless can be more custom-tailored in their character.

Wayfinding will become even more of an issue as the community implements the land use strategies contained in this plan. With additional development, including new residential units and public amenities, it will become increasingly important that people be made aware of the variety of activities available in Downtown Monroe.

A public information and wayfinding system should be enacted, with the following components:

- Identifiers at major gateways into downtown;
- Secondary signs that lead users to government services and public amenities;
- Directional signs that improve circulation for pedestrians and automobiles; and
- Signs to guide users to appropriate parking facilities.
- Downtown directory sign or brochure to inform visitors key information.

In order to accomplish this, a four-tiered system of wayfinding should be established, as follows:

Level I Signage- Downtown Gateway Indicator

Provide gateway signage and ornamentation at key approaches to downtown. These gateways are identified on the framework map. Signage and other elements should work in harmony and reflect the heritage and character of downtown.

Level II Signage- Directional Signage

Directional signage should lead visitors to specific activity centers, government facilities and public amenities, as well as other local points of interest. These signs should contain similar graphic elements contained in the gateway signage, including lettering, logos and color schemes.



A directional sign should lead visitors to specific activity centers.



Resource locators direct visitors to specific resources, such as a building, famous street, or landmark.

Resource Locators

Provide key information signage to help visitors locate specific resources, such as buildings and landmarks. These signs also contain similar graphic elements in order to maintain consistency and continuity, but should be smaller and simple in appearance. Level II signs should be located in close proximity to the actual site and not interfere with access to the site or specific feature. These signs can also be integrated into landscape. For example, a Level II sign demarcating Al Borlin Park could be integrated into the proposed overlook at the east end of Fremont Street.

Level III Signage- Regulatory Signs

These indicate restrictions on traffic and parking as well as basic health and safety concerns. Signs that limit parking hours, restrict traffic flow, prohibit access and set speed limits are among the signs in this category.

Level IV Signage- Pedestrian Directories

Provide directional maps at key gathering points in the downtown. Areas such as parking facilities, government offices, public plazas and other key pedestrian destinations should contain maps of downtown that locate important civic, entertainment, dining, emergency facilities and public restrooms. These directories are often permanent maps mounted on a pole or stand and can be accompanied by placeholders for seasonal information pamphlets or other useful information.

Design Concept for Downtown Wayfinding System



These conceptual sketches illustrate the principle of a wayfinding system. It uses a standard metal panel as a base, but in some areas would incorporate a custom-tailored graphics system that highlights the different activity centers within Downtown Monroe. The background “frame” color would be consistent throughout downtown. A distinct logo and/or text would then be used to differentiate each activity center. The panels should be scaled to match those of standard traffic and regulatory signs. A decorative cap could be used in the downtown area and a simpler metal cap could be used in the outlying areas. (Note that these are conceptual and that more refined graphic design development should occur before installation.)

Ornamentation and Landscape Features

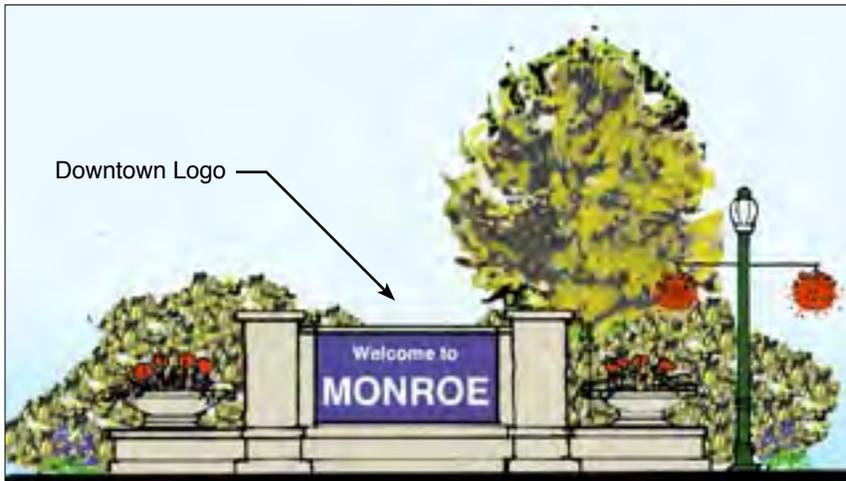
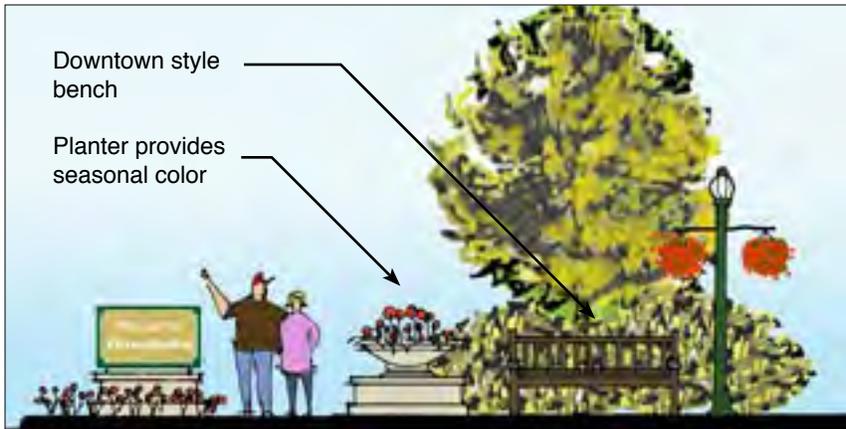
In conjunction with the information presented through the different levels of signage, landscaped gateways should also be constructed at key traffic decision points. These should serve as “previews” of downtown and all should have a consistent landscape scheme that is associated with the downtown streetscape. Downtown gateways should be identified with coordinated directional signs, distinct landscape elements and clear pedestrian crossings.

Note that the wayfinding sign system designs presented are conceptual to illustrate the principles of an organized system that would include a variety of sign types. Before actual construction and installation of any signs, a more detailed plan for location of signs should be developed and more refined graphics should be produced. Note also that, in time, additional locations for signs will be identified.

Installation of the wayfinding system should have high priority, because it yields substantial benefits for reasonably low investment costs. Initial funding may come from the City’s CIP program, although a more comprehensive system could be better accomplished with a local improvement district, using tax increment financing and assessments. In addition, several entry points in outlying areas should have signs identifying the way to downtown.

Actions:

- Develop a comprehensive signage package that reflects a hierarchy of information and a variety of applications;
- Develop gateways into the downtown that include wayfinding elements;
- Install directional signs in a coordinated system; and
- Install pedestrian-oriented directories in public parking lots.



Level I Sign. These may be combined with landscaping at key intersections. These should have a consistent landscape scheme that is associated with the downtown streetscape.

11

Design Character & Guidelines

The Downtown area conveys a diverse character, resulting from a mix of building types, materials, forms and styles that have developed throughout its history. It reflects an evolving context that continues today. While some features are relatively consistent, within are areas that reflect deferring historic development patterns, as well as more activity.

This chapter sets forth the basic design objectives for each of the neighborhood areas. Any new development should help to meet these objectives. For each neighborhood area, the objectives are set forth in two categories; site design, which addresses building alignment in plan as well as landscaping, and building design, which focuses on mass and scale.

Design guidelines for new construction are also presented in this chapter. The guidelines address streetscape elements, site and building issues and parking consideration. (Note that a separate, companion document “Downtown Design Guidelines” provides guidelines for treatment of historic buildings.

Historic Main Street Area

The Historic Main Street Area contains a mix of building types, but is substantially influenced by traditional commercial buildings. These are primarily rectangular buildings from one to two, there are also several three stories buildings. The primary entrance is oriented to the street and is typically a part of the storefront system. The predominant roof form is flat although some gable and hipped roofs do occur. A continuous street wall is apparent, although broken in some areas where a surface lot occurs.

The primary goal for development here is to retain the historic character with a high concentration of retail, dining and entertainment use, while also accommodating professional services. New infill should reflect the context of traditional development patterns, including the location, orientation, mass, and scale of buildings.

Building uses that would complement the area include retail/commercial on the ground floor with office and/or residential uses on the upper floors.



The primary entrance of a new building should follow traditional patterns and be oriented toward the street.

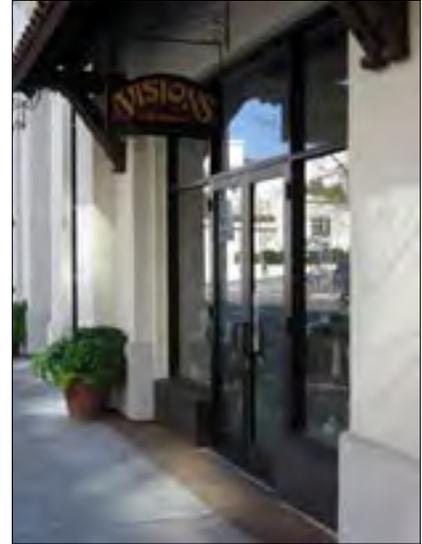
Site Design Objectives

- Enhance pedestrian and bicycle connections.
- Encourage new development to incorporate public artwork and streetscape furnishings.
- Locate parking to the rear of a structure.
- Small pocket plazas are appropriate in some areas.

Building Design Objectives

- Orient the primary entrance toward the street.
- Respect historic resources.
- Locate retail storefronts and restaurants at the street level.
- Reflect traditional building scale and height.
- Maintain the alignment of horizontal elements along the street.
- Divide new larger buildings into modules that reflect traditional buildings in the area. This will maintain the rhythm and scale of the street wall and enhance the pedestrian experience.
- Use high-quality materials similar to those seen traditionally.
- Encourage new interpretations of traditional building styles.
- Provide a human scale by incorporating a base, middle and cap into the building design.
- Provide a solid-to-void ratio that is similar to traditional commercial buildings.

Please see the Downtown Design Guidelines for building within this area.



Development in the Historic Main Street Area should provide a storefront at the street level.

Al Borlin Park Area

The Al Borlin Park Area contains several building types which result in a varied streetscape. This mix includes traditional retail storefront buildings, office buildings, service commercial, residential structures, and light industrial. Building forms are rectangular and typically one to two stories. The primary entrance is oriented to the street. Several traditional roof forms are visible including flat, hip and gable roofs.

The primary goal for development in the Al Borlin Park Area is to create an “urban village” that accommodates a mix of uses, including residential, commercial, office, and civic facilities, at a moderate density. This could include a front yard, parking area or plaza. Buildings should primarily be one and two stories in height although an additional story may be considered. New infill should reflect traditional development patterns, including the location and orientation of a building on its site. Building facades should also reflect traditional types. Smart Growth and low impact development techniques are encouraged throughout the area.



New development should respect the scale of adjacent structures.

Site Design Objectives

- Enhance pedestrian and bicycle connections to Main Street and Al Borlin Park.
- Provide a building setback that is within the range of neighboring properties.
- Design buildings to take advantage of natural amenities such as Woods Creek and Al Borlin Park.
- Encourage new development to incorporate public artwork, usable open space and landscaping elements.
- Respect the scale of adjacent structures.
- Locate parking in a structure or underground when feasible. When surface parking is necessary, it should be located to the side or rear of the structure.
- Use Smart Growth and low impact development techniques, when feasible.

Building Design Objectives

- Orient the primary entrance toward the street.
- Locate retail storefronts at the street level.
- Use high-quality materials similar to those seen traditionally and compatible with others within the area
- Encourage new interpretations of traditional building styles.
- Provide a human scale by incorporating a base, middle and cap into the building design.
- Provide a solid-to-void ratio that is similar to traditional buildings.
- Use Smart Growth and low impact development techniques, when feasible.



Enhance pedestrian and bicycle connections to Al Borlin Park.

Downtown Neighborhood Area

The Downtown Neighborhood Area contains a mix of building types, but is predominately traditional single family residential buildings on smaller lots. Building forms are rectangular and one to two stories. The primary entrance is oriented to the street and protected by a covered porch. Roof forms include hip and gable types. Where commercial and office buildings occur, they are on larger lots and are primarily two stories; these include some flat-roofed structure. There is also a lower building to lot area ratio than in the Historic Main Street Area.

The primary goal for development in this area is to maintain the current low density mix of uses. Buildings should primarily be one and two stories in height, although some three story portions of individual developments may occur. These three story elements should be setback from the street and adjacent residential properties. Development should reflect traditional development patterns, including the location and orientation of a building on its site and the mass and scale of the neighboring buildings. Safe pedestrian and bicycle connections to other areas should be provided.

Land uses that would complement the area include adaptive reuse of residential buildings, office use, corner stores and neighborhood services. Retail storefronts could occur along Blakeley with residential uses above.

Site Design Objectives

- Enhance community pedestrian and bicycle connections within the area and to Historic Main Street and Al Borlin Park.
- The majority of development should continue to be residential in character with neighborhood-serving commercial uses and small business space.
- Locate parking to the side or rear of a building.
- Access parking from alleyways when feasible.
- Encourage shared curb cuts.
- A new building should step down in scale to respect the height, form and scale of a single family house within its immediate setting.

Building Design Objectives

- Promote low density development compatible with current residential and commercial uses.
- Orient building entry toward the street.
- Step down building height adjacent to historic structures and single family homes.
- Reflect traditional development patterns on small lots.



The current commercial and light industrial density levels should be maintained.

Rails & Road Neighborhood Area

The Rails and Road Neighborhood Area contains light industrial and other commercial activities. Many of the properties are double fronted with roads along the front and rear of the properties.

Future development in the Rails and Roads Neighborhood should complement the Historic Main Street Area while providing a mix of commercial uses. Several large industrial and storage buildings are located here, an adaptive reuse of these structures would be appropriate.

Site Design Objectives

- Enhance community pedestrian and bicycle connections within the area and to Historic Main Street and Al Borlin Park neighborhoods.
- Locate parking to the side or rear of a building.
- Encourage shared curb cuts.

Building Design Objectives

- Maintain current commercial and industrial building densities.
- Continue the double fronted building orientation.
- Locate retail storefronts and restaurants along US 2.
- Maintain rectangular building forms.

Design Guidelines

These guidelines, to the greatest extent feasible, should be met. However, in some cases, compliance with one may conflict with another, depending upon the specific conditions, including physical site constraints. These general guidelines apply throughout the Al Borlin Park Neighborhood, Downtown Neighborhood, and Rails and Road Neighborhood for new construction and new additions. Reference the separate Historic Main Street Design Guidelines document for design guidelines specific to that area.

Streetscape Design Guidelines

Sidewalks, parking areas and streets make up the public realm. In commercial areas public open spaces, such as dining patios and storefront recesses, also contribute to the character of the streetscape.

Streetscape improvements, such as enhanced paving, street trees, light fixtures, landscape accents and furnishings, should occur. These increase one's ability to perceive the traditional character of the area, improve pedestrian circulation and visually link properties within a neighborhood.

There are few paving designs and materials used in Downtown Monroe. It is appropriate to have decorative paving in areas such as plazas and courtyards.

Streetscape elements should be compatible with the specific character area in which they are located, while also meeting functional requirements.

1. The overall character of the streetscape should reflect the character area within which it is located.

- A traditional commercial street should have street trees.
- An area that historically has been predominantly residential should continue to reflect this character, for example, in the manner in which landscape materials are used.

2. Street furniture designs should be consistent throughout each character area.

- All street furniture elements should have a consistent materials palette and color scheme within a character area.
- They should be modest in design and reflect the character of the area.
- Designs may vary among character areas.
- Incorporating public art into street furnishings is encouraged. (See Guideline #8)



Streetscape improvements should increase one's ability to perceive the traditional character of the area, improve pedestrian circulation and visually link properties within a neighborhood.



Streetscape elements should have a consistent materials palette and color scheme.



Providing a landscaped edge along the street front is appropriate in Downtown Neighborhood and Al Borlin Park Neighborhood. Plants with variety in texture and color enhance the visual appeal in these areas and are encouraged.

3. Cluster street furnishings where room allows.

- Cluster street furnishings to create a sense of place and invite use.

4. Maintain a clear, continuous walkway along the front of a building.

- Locate street furniture, outdoor tables and other accessories so they will not block the pedestrian route.

5. Paving should be in keeping with the hierarchy of the location and character of the area.

- Sidewalks should generally have a simple concrete finish.
- Generally, use decorative paving in specialty areas including primary pedestrian routes and other special function areas. For example, using decorative paving in a courtyard or at a building entry is appropriate.

6. Street trees should be planted whenever feasible.

- Street tree patterns may vary among character areas.

7. Planters should be incorporated into the streetscape.

- Where sidewalks are narrow and space for street trees does not exist, provide free-standing planters to enhance the pedestrian experience.

Public Art

Public art should enhance the pedestrian experience throughout the area. It should be installed in courtyards, plazas and open spaces. It can also be incorporated into street furnishings, walkways and at building entrances.

8. The use of public art is encouraged.

- Consider locations in plazas, courtyards and walkways through properties.
- Public art should be installed such that it maintains view opportunities of key resources.



Benches also provide opportunities to incorporate public art.



Where a major intersection occurs, provide a building to anchor at the corner.



Orient the primary building entrance to the street. In commercial areas, place the front facade at the sidewalk edge.



Arrange buildings so they create a usable outdoor public space.

Site Design Guidelines

These guidelines address the manner in which a building is positioned on its site, as well as the ways in which landscape elements are used. They also provide guidance for the organization of uses on a site, including open space, building location, parking, pedestrian, bicycle and automobile circulation and landscape design.

The objective is to create a vibrant area that is appealing to pedestrians and that supports a mix of dining, retail and entertainment, as well as offices, residential and cultural activities. Providing access to public transit, bicycle and pedestrian ways also is encouraged.

Building Placement

A new building should be sited to respect development patterns that are established for the area, such as the orientation of entrances to the street and the alignment of building fronts. The building placement should also be located to ensure pedestrian activity at the street edge as well as any abutting outdoor use areas.

9. Position a building to maintain views down the street.

- Site buildings in relation to adjoining properties to frame a view as it may be observed from public rights-of-way. Avoid completely blocking such a view with a large building mass.
- Consider views from neighboring properties. Maintain and enhance these views when feasible.
- The eastward view, down Fremont Street to Al Borlin Park should be maintained as well as the view up and down Main Street.

10. A building should be positioned to fit within the general setback patterns of its character area.

- Exceptions to the setback requirement may be considered if an alternative street edge treatment meets the intent of maintaining the street wall. For example, if a pedestrian place of refuge is provided and is designed as a pedestrian-friendly area, and/or if the site is constrained such that the standard setback is not feasible, then a different setback may be considered.

11. Within the Main Street Neighborhood Area, maintain the alignment of façades at the sidewalk's edge.

- Place as much of the façade of the building at the property line as possible.

12. Orient a primary building entry to the street.

- A recessed entry at the sidewalk edge is appropriate along Main Street.
- Multifamily uses should also have some building entrances oriented to the street, but may be set back farther where a front yard or landscaped area is planned.

13. Where two or more buildings will be located in a major site development, arrange them in a cluster to define outdoor spaces.

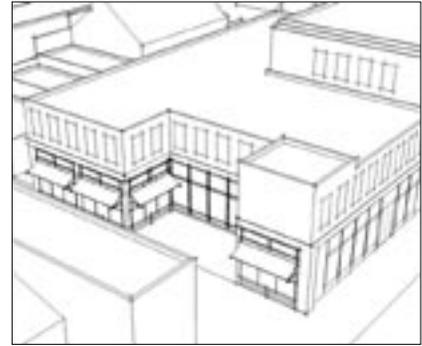
- Clustering buildings to create active outdoor public space is appropriate.

14. Where a major intersection occurs, provide a building anchor at the corner.

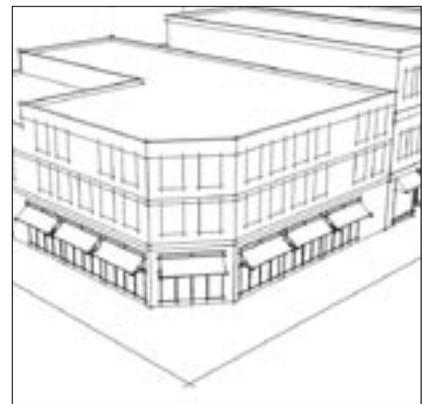
- Define the corner with a strong building presence.
- Enhancing the corner with a pedestrian-friendly entrance plaza is also encouraged. This may include human-scaled design features such as benches and planters.
- Building should have presence while maintaining the scale and character of the area.

15. Organize the public edges of a site to provide visual interest to pedestrians.

- Incorporate display windows or other architectural features to provide interest.
- Provide a landscape feature along the walkway edge.
- Locate a building at the walkway edge if it is a goal for that specific character area.



Some variation in outdoor use areas and building placement is appropriate within the Al Borlin Park Neighborhood.



Where a new building is to be sited at a key intersection, consider providing a corner plaza or an angled entry.



Where a building will be seen from both the front and the back elevations, it should be designed to be “double fronted” with doors and windows facing both directions. In this case, a new building facades a surface parking lot as well as the street beyond.



A usable open space is provided in this mixed use development within the one story and enhanced paving and landscape.



A usable open space becomes a play field in this decorative configuration.

Usable Open Space

Usable open space should be provided and maintained. This usable open space should enhance the site as a place for pedestrians. It is important that usable open space be an appropriate scale to encourage its use. It should also look onto activity areas or connect to primary pedestrian circulation routes. It should be coordinated with that of adjoining properties and trails when feasible.

16. Projects should provide usable open space when feasible.

- Usable open space may be composed of one or more of the following elements at grade:
 - A landscaped yard (potentially in residential mixed use subareas)
 - A courtyard
 - A patio

17. Develop usable open space as a focal point for the site.

- For example, use open space to connect the entrances of two buildings on a site.
- Orient a public space to encourage pedestrian activities; provide views of activities, cultural resources, or natural features; and provide visual interest.



A usable open space is achieved in this location by providing a decorative plaza.

Pedestrian Connections

Pedestrians, including visitors, residents and those who work Downtown, should have safe, convenient access to the various functions within a site. Therefore, a coordinated pedestrian circulation system that fits the character of the area should be provided. This network of streets and some alleys provides access to secondary uses. It also provides access to additional units when used in a multi-family or mixed use cluster.

18. Each project should provide an integrated circulation system that links the property with adjoining uses.

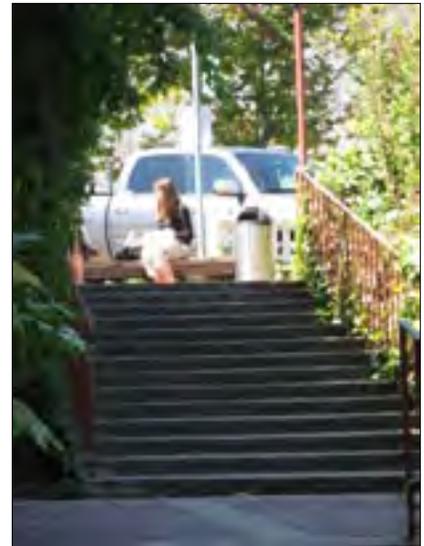
- Provide direct pedestrian access from a public sidewalk to the majority of individual uses and spaces on a property.
- Appropriate pedestrian connections include the following:
 - Sidewalks
 - Internal walkways
 - Courtyards and plazas

19. Position walkways to encourage pedestrian use.

- Provide pedestrian access that is adequate in size, availability, accessibility and function to satisfy demands relative to the size of the project and proposed use(s).
- Locate a walkway so that key destination points, such as building entries, are clearly visible.
- Site a path in an area that will remain visible from active public spaces.
- Define the walkway with landscaping, site furniture and pedestrian-scaled lighting.



Architectural features can enhance pedestrian ways.



Provide pedestrian connections to public sidewalks.



Exterior lighting should be directed downward to prevent unnecessary glare.

Site Lighting

The character and level of lighting that is used on a building is of special concern. In the past, these exterior lights were simple in character and were used to highlight signs, entrances and first-floor details. Most fixtures had incandescent lamps that cast a color similar to daylight, were relatively low in intensity, and were shielded with simple shade devices. This overall effect of modest, focused building lighting should be continued but with due regard for safety and security.

In addition to compliance with zoning ordinances, site lighting should meet the following guidelines:

20. Use lighting for the following:

- To accent building entrances.
- To light signs.
- To provide a safe and secure environment for public places.

21. Exterior lighting should be directed down and the light source concealed from adjoining properties.

- Prevent glare by using shielded and focused light sources.
- Avoid “uplighting” of entire building faces, or outlining frame of building.
- Shield lighting associated with service areas, parking lots and parking structures.

Utilities and Service Areas

Utilities and service areas shall be visually unobtrusive and integrated with the design of the site and the building. They should generally be located to the rear of the primary structure or on a secondary façade.

22. Orient service entrances, waste disposal areas and other similar uses away from major streets.

23. Position service areas to minimize conflicts with other abutting uses.

- Design service areas to be on site and away from public sidewalks when feasible.
- When service must be provided directly from a public way, schedule deliveries at times when pedestrian activity is lowest.

24. Minimize the visual impact of mechanical equipment on the public way.

- Screen equipment from view.
- Use low-profile mechanical units on rooftops that are not visible from public ways.
- Locate satellite dishes out of public view to the extent feasible and in compliance with other regulations.
- Locate utility meters out of public view when feasible.
- Several screening devices may be considered; these include:
 - building parapets
 - landscape elements
 - architectural features
 - painting the equipment to match the roof may be a more appropriate solution than a large screened enclosure.



Screen trash and recycling from view.



Consider dividing a larger building into modules or bays that are similar in scale to buildings seen traditionally.

Building Design Guidelines

New buildings should respect the traditional character of Downtown, while also reflecting their own period and function. New buildings should also enhance the area as a place for pedestrians, including visitors, residents and those who work there.

The basic design objective is to encourage new buildings that convey a sense of local identity, reflect the evolving character of the area while respecting its history and heritage. They should complement the natural features of Monroe, especially along Woods Creek in the Al Borlin Park Neighborhood Park Area.

Mass and Scale

A variety of building sizes exist throughout the area. While contemporary design approaches are encouraged, developments should continue to exhibit a variety of sizes similar to the buildings seen traditionally in the area.

25. Consider dividing a larger building into “modules” or bays that are similar in scale to buildings seen traditionally.

- If a larger building is divided into “modules,” these should be expressed three-dimensionally throughout the entire building.

26. Express façade components in ways that will help to establish traditional building scale.

- Repeat wall elements, including windows, columns, ornamental trim and architectural features, such that rhythms and patterns result.
- Use windows and doors that are proportional in scale to those seen traditionally.
- Use horizontal elements such as porches, balconies and horizontal coursing to break up the vertical mass of a wall.

27. A building should appear to be similar in width to those seen traditionally within the neighborhood context.

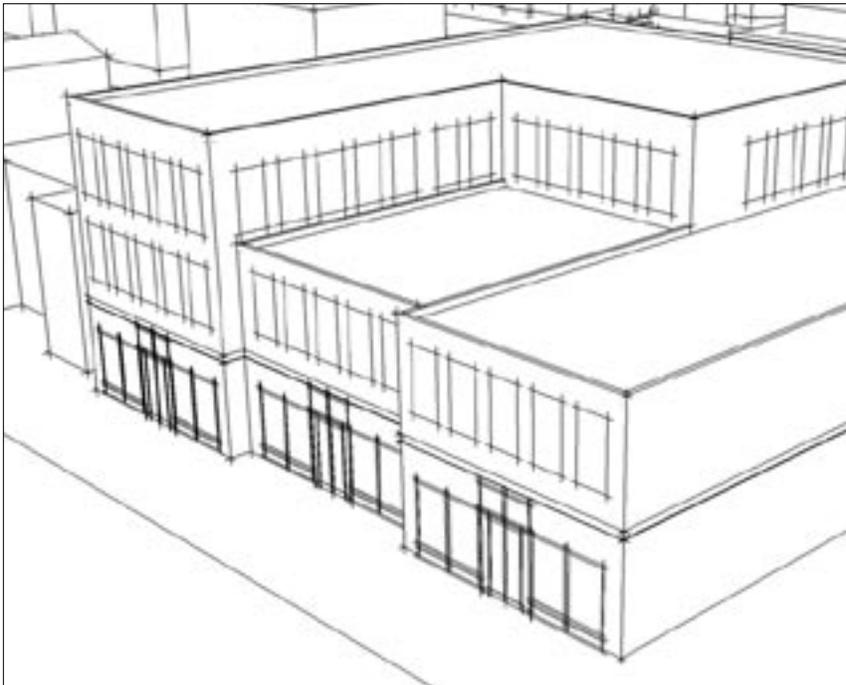
- If a building is to be wider than those seen traditionally in the area, it should be divided into modules that express those dimensions typical of the neighborhood.

Building Height

The height of new buildings within Downtown Monroe is a key consideration when discussing how the city can achieve its objectives of inviting desired investment, increasing residential density and making more efficient use of land. Initially, one may assume that, in order to be compatible, a new building must be limited to one and two stories in height. Limiting absolute height is ONE method of designing to be compatible, but there are other creative techniques that can be used to accommodate taller portions of buildings and still maintain a sense of small town character.

A key consideration is that heights vary along some city blocks. Even where taller buildings do exist, they do not maintain a constant taller height for an entire length of a block. This variation in height provides a sense of scale.

In some cases, setting back the upper floor of a building will help to reduce its perceived scale. In other locations, varying the height as seen at the street edge, with portions that are two and three stories, for example, would also be compatible. The lesson is that increased height can work, where it is not consistent, or uniform, but is instead varied in massing, and when the street level is designed to convey a relatively low scale.



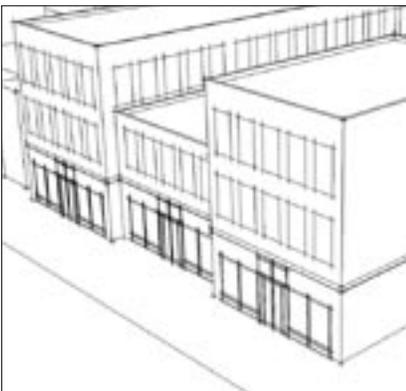
It is important for taller structures to express the traditional height of the area as seen from the street.



Set back the upper floor to vary the building facade profile.



Buildings on sites larger than two traditional lot widths should be designed to reflect the traditional scale of development.



Vary the height of a building in accordance with traditional lot widths.

Where Might Additional Height be Appropriate?

Additional building height is appropriate where it is visually compatible with its context and when it helps to achieve other city goals. For example, height is acceptable where views are maintained and the rhythm of traditional building components is conveyed. It is also appropriate when the project meets other community planning objectives, such as affordable housing and green building principles.

28. Floor-to-floor heights should appear to be similar to those seen in early buildings.

- In particular, the openings in new construction should appear similar in height to those seen traditionally.
- Continue the pattern of having first floors taller than upper floors.

Height Variation

Variation in height should occur where the site is larger than two traditional lot widths, in order to reduce overall scale of the building. A variation in façade height, often in conjunction with setting back an upper floor, may be required.

29. Height variation should be achieved using one or more of the following:

- Vary the building height in accordance with traditional lot width.
- Set back the upper floor to vary the building façade profile(s) and the roof forms across the width and the depth of the building.
- Vary the façade (or parapet) heights at the front.

Height Variation for Larger Sites

New development occupying a site of more than one traditional lot width should be designed to integrate with the scale created by narrower existing buildings. The architectural rhythm of earlier street façades should also be reflected in new development to retain and enhance the human scale and character of the center of the city.

30. On sites comprising two or more traditional lots, a building shall be designed to reflect the individual parcels.

- The façade height shall be varied to reflect traditional lot width.
- Height should be varied in keeping with traditional lot widths.

Building and Roof Form

One of the most prominent and unifying elements is the similarity of building and roof forms throughout the area. Most buildings are simple rectangular solids with flat, gable or hip roofs. This characteristic is important and should be continued.

31. Primary building forms should appear similar to those seen traditionally in the area.

- Simple rectangular forms with flat, gable or hip roofs are appropriate.
- Other forms may be used as an accent and should remain subordinate.



Express facade components in ways that reflect the building context. This infill building transitions from a residential neighborhood to a commercial street.

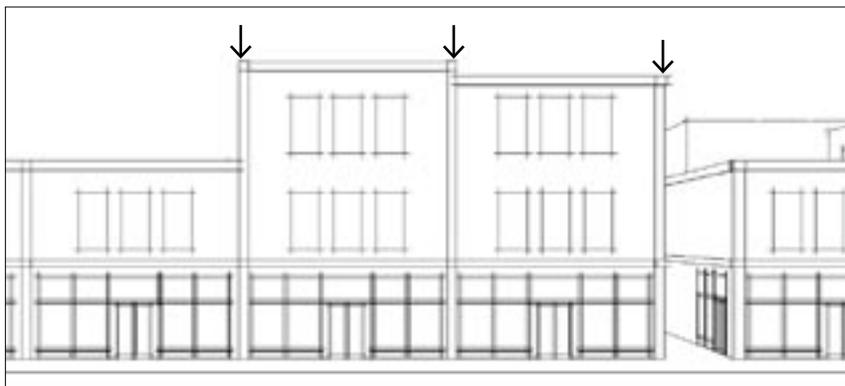
Expression of Lot Widths

The street façade is composed of a sequence of buildings defined either in width or in design arrangement by original lot dimensions. The building façade composition, fenestration pattern, detail and materials will accentuate the diversity of the street façade, and consequently the richness of the street character.

Articulation of the traditional lot width enables larger scaled development to integrate more successfully. It also creates the opportunity to enhance visual vitality and activity in various respects within the building. A new building should be designed to define this unit of scale.

32. A new building should reflect the traditional lot widths as expressed by two or more of the following:

- Variation in height at internal lot lines
- Variation in the plane of the front façade
- Street façade composition
- Variation in architectural detailing and materials to emphasize the building module



Divide a larger building into modules that reflect the traditional lot width of the area.



Brick is a material that is part of the design traditions of Downtown Monroe, and its use in new construction is appropriate.

Building Materials

Building materials should convey a sense of “belonging” in the setting of Downtown Monroe. Using traditional, native materials, as well as contemporary alternatives that convey a sense of scale and craftsmanship should be continued. High quality stucco, brick and wood occurs throughout the area. Creative uses of these materials and high quality detailing are encouraged.

New materials also may be considered, however, when they relate to those used traditionally in scale, texture, matte finish and detailing. They should help to convey the traditional scale as well.

33. Use materials similar to those used traditionally.

- Traditional building materials reduce the perceived scale of a building with appropriate detailing and should continue to be used in the area.

34. Creative use of new materials is encouraged, when they will be compatible with those used traditionally in Monroe.

- Materials should convey a hand-crafted character.
- Materials should be of high quality.
- Materials also should be durable, with proven performance in Monroe’s Pacific Northwest climate.

35. Use building materials that help establish a human scale.

- For example, use modular masonry units, such as brick or stucco, detailed to give a sense of scale. Lap siding, wood or a similar material is also appropriate.
- Large panelized products and extensive featureless surfaces are inappropriate.
- Changes in color, texture and materials can also help to define human scale and should be incorporated in building designs.

36. LEED certified building materials and principles should be used where feasible.

Solid to Void

Within a traditional building context a sense of visual continuity is provided by a buildings solid to void ratio (the percentage of glass to solid wall surface that is used on a building face). This should be maintained.

37. Maintain the visual continuity of the solid to void ratio along the street.

- Provide a solid to void ratio on a new building façade that appears similar to the established neighborhood context.



A higher percentage of transparency at the street level and a higher percentage of solid wall on upper floors is in keeping with traditional commercial development in the area.



Structured parking should be located with a wrap of commercial or residential uses when feasible.



Where a parking lot abuts a public sidewalk, provide a visual buffer.

Parking

New parking facilities, are expected to be constructed in Downtown Monroe as these areas redevelop and density increases. New parking areas may be public or private.

Parking facilities should be designed to be attractive, compatible additions that provide a pedestrian- friendly edge to the area. Incorporating landscaping within and at the edges of surface lots, and providing a building wrap to a parking structure are appropriate treatments. Locating these facilities away from public view is preferred.

38. Design a parking structure so that it creates a visually attractive and active pedestrian environment.

- The street elevation of a parking structure should be developed with a retail/mixed use building wrap.
- Secondary elevations of a parking structure should include one or more of the following:
 - Retail/commercial wrap
 - Murals or public art
 - Decorative architectural features
 - Display cases
 - Landscaping
 - Public amenities (street furnishings).

39. Parking access points should be designed to minimize conflicts with pedestrian traffic.

- Curb cuts should be located away from intersections to minimize conflicts with pedestrian and traffic movement.
- Shared drives are encouraged.

40. A surface parking lot should be visually subordinate to the street scene.

- Locate a surface lot behind a building whenever feasible.
- Site a parking lot so it will minimize gaps in the continuous building wall of a block.

41. Where a parking lot abuts a public sidewalk, provide a visual buffer.

- Any surface parking lot should have landscaped area distributed along the street frontage.

Development Prototypes

In order to remain competitive, downtown should offer a range of building types that support a pedestrian-oriented environment and accommodate desired uses. This includes projects of moderately increased densities, of two to three stories. Recent trends in successful downtowns include mixed-use projects, which incorporate retail, professional offices and residential uses. These uses may be distributed horizontally across a property, or they may be stacked vertically.

Development that defines the street edge with features that are appealing to pedestrians is a goal for new development. Other communities around the country have successfully implemented such projects. One example is the evolution of “double-fronted” buildings that have a storefront on the street edge and a second entry facing to the interior of the block, where parking is located. Others include townhouses along edges that face residential neighborhoods and/or public amenities.

The projects presented on the following pages reflect recent development successes in other communities that can serve as models for new development in Downtown Monroe. Note that many of these also reflect a response to the local context in terms of building materials, scale and design character and that literal translation of some of these projects to Monroe may not be appropriate. Each of these projects does, however, demonstrate principles of compatible infill that would apply when adapted to the local setting.

Residential Developments



These residential units are divided into smaller building modules in order to reduce the perceived mass and scale of the development.



Multi-family residential structures.



The setback third floor reduces the perceived height of this multi-family structure from the sidewalk.

Mixed-Use Development on the Edge of a Residential Neighborhood

A mixed-use project in Boulder, CO is represented in the five photos on this page. It includes a two-story commercial component that faces the main street. Townhouses are located along the side street and are designed to reflect the scale and forms of traditional single-family buildings in the neighborhood. The project is on a sloping site, which is used to conceal a lower level of parking.



The commercial component is divided in modules that reflect the scale of traditional commercial buildings in the area. Retail is at the street level, with offices above.



The commercial element is on the left; townhouses are on the right.



Each townhouse has a private entry framed with a porch.



An upper terrace provides private outdoor space for residents.



Guest parking is at the upper terrace level.

Mixed-Use Development on the Edge of a Residential Neighborhood

Another mixed-use project in Boulder, CO is illustrated in the four photos on this page. It combines uses in separate structures. A building facing the main street contains commercial only, with retail below and offices above. Residential units are provided in “terrace apartments,” which relate to the single-family houses on the flanking streets.



In this mixed-use development, multifamily units are located to the rear (left in the photo). Commercial uses are in the front building, which is divided into modules. A partial third floor is set back from the street to reduce the scale of the building.



Offices on the upper floors have a central entry with shared lobby.



Multifamily residential faces the side street.



The storefronts reinterpret traditional elements in a contemporary manner.

Mixed-Use Prototypes

Recent trends in successful downtowns include mixed-use projects, which incorporate retail, professional offices and residential. These uses may be distributed horizontally across a property or they may be stacked vertically. Designs such as these are appropriate in Downtown Monroe.



Three story mixed use building:

- Storefront built to sidewalk edge
- Offices above retail
- Third floor set back, with balconies
- Parking in rear
- Landscape buffer along alley



Two story commercial building with detached residential:

- Storefront built to sidewalk edge
- Offices above retail
- Residential units in rear
- Courtyards at residential fronts



Two story mixed use buildings

- Storefront built to sidewalk edge
- Residential on upper floors of both
- Offices at grade in rear building

Mixed-Use Development on the Edge of a Residential Neighborhood

A mixed-use project in Boulder, CO combines commercial, professional office and residential uses. The brick building anchors the corner as a traditional commercial building while down the block offices are provided at street level with residential space on the second level.



Commercial and residential mixed use buildings.



Professional office units are on the ground floor and residential units are on the second floor.

Mixed-Use Development at the Street Level



Outdoor dining areas create an active street experience.



The facade at the street level should be articulated to convey a human scale.



Retail at the street level with residential on the second floor.

Commercial Developments



A change in building materials or paint color divides a larger commercial building into modules that reflect traditional lot widths.

New Commercial Development for the Rails and Roads neighborhood

This project, in Grapevine, TX, combines a retrofit of an existing grocery store with a new double fronted commercial building. The grocery was located at the rear of the site, with a field of parking in front. With a negotiated parking reduction, a new commercial building was constructed along Main Street edge and the other building was remodeled for specialty retail and offices.



The new double-fronted building aligns at the street edge. A small plaza is located at the corner. The entrance to the parking, which is accessed from a side street, is visible at the left and a portion of the remodeled original building is in the background.



The remodeled older building is located behind the building shown above. A buffered parking area is located in the interior of the lot, between two buildings.



Shops on the Main Street side, with offices above.

Mixed-Use Development With Structured Parking



A parking structure should be visually attractive and have an active pedestrian environment at the street level.

12

Opportunity Sites

A key concept of the framework for downtown is to redevelop underutilized lands in the area. These will provide a place for housing, offices and an expanded retail market to occur. Some specific projects are illustrated in this chapter to demonstrate the potential character that the development should have. These are considered “Opportunity Sites” and are presented to illustrate the potential that exists for new investment.

Opportunity Sites

Opportunity sites create unique environments for infill and redevelopment designed to strengthen and expand the downtown core.

Expansion will occur by:

- Increasing the density of commercial activities;
- Ensuring that infill and redevelopment exhibit similar desirable architectural characteristics; and
- Accommodating new types of land uses (e.g., mixed-use projects, multifamily residential uses, etc).

Specific opportunity sites are identified which reflect different configurations of land uses. The diagrams show potential development patterns and are for illustrative purposes only. They also are intended to promote a vision for the general character of improvements in the area. Prior to actual implementation of any of the concepts presented in this chapter, more detailed design development should occur. All of the concepts will evolve over time, and therefore, alternatives should always be considered.

Note that these sites are addressed individually, yet there is an interrelationship which would influence which of these concepts is actually executed. Development of one project may preclude execution of another or in some way influence the overall intensity of development. Others might be modified in response to other changing conditions. Also note that any of the study sketches which include privately owned lands is to illustrate opportunities. No forced redevelopment is implied.

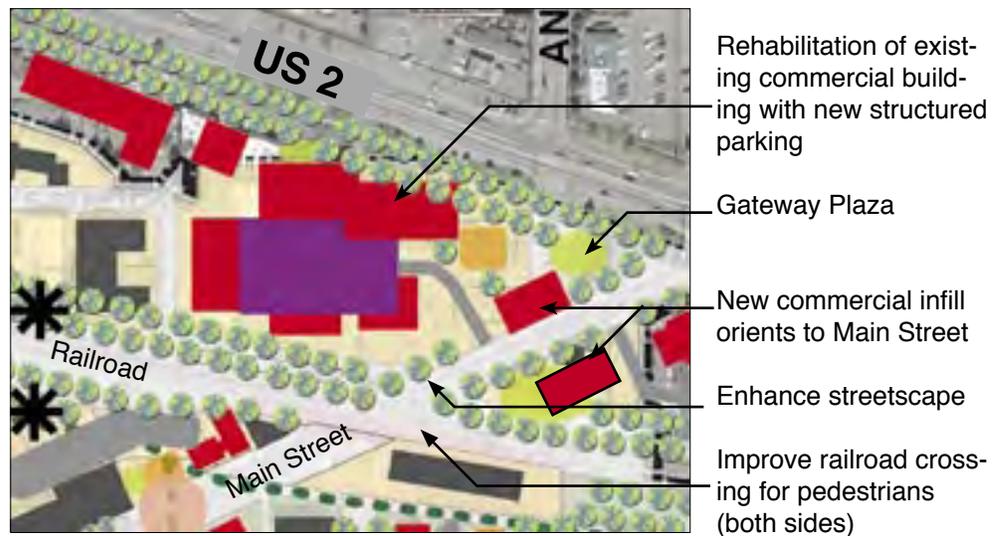
Site 1: US 2 & Main

This site is part of the Rails and Road Neighborhood and is located at the intersection of US 2 and Main Street. It fronts US 2 and the railroad tracks, and visible from the downtown core. It acts as both a gateway to downtown and as a transition between the US 2 commercial corridor and downtown. It is separated from the downtown core by the railroad tracks.

The site provides an opportunity to be redeveloped as a downtown gateway with specialty retail and offices.

The diagram for this site reflects the following design concepts:

- The intersection is enhanced as a gateway, lushly landscaped to promote the “Greening of Monroe” concept. The historic smoke stack that is located here could also be enhanced as a landmark to downtown, although its structural integrity should be analyzed first.
- Provides a pedestrian-friendly environment with streetscape and landscape improvements. Also, buildings are wrapped with interesting storefronts and are oriented to US 2, Main Street and downtown.
- Promotes an environmentally-friendly project, by reusing the existing structure.
- Takes advantage of a sloping site by providing two levels of parking in a deck. Access is provided from US 2 (upper level) and Main (lower level).
- Sidewalk and intersection improvements strengthen pedestrian connections from nearby neighborhoods and downtown.



Site 1: US 2 & Main

Site 2: The new Main Street plaza and public parking lot

This site is located at the northeast end of Main Street. It includes a private parking lot that is located along the railroad tracks.

The site provides an opportunity to redevelop as a public plaza and surface parking lot. Citizens identified a desire to have several outdoor plazas of various sizes downtown to accommodate various festivals and events. This site's location on Main Street, as well as its visual connection to the School Administration Building, makes it an obvious choice. Improvements could include: seating, trees, festival lot, paving, and a new infill building that could address both Main Street and the plaza.

The diagram for this site reflects the following design concepts:

- The site is developed with three primary design components: a moderately-sized public plaza, festival lot and new infill building.
- Provides a pedestrian-friendly environment with streetscape and landscape improvements.
- A sculpture, statuary, or other monument is provided to enhance the visual connection to the Civic Site.
- Provides both active and passive use space.



Along Main Street, improvements would include new mixed use and new commercial infill buildings, and enhanced pedestrian crossing.



New Main Street Plaza and public parking



The current school administration building would be rehabilitated.

Site 3: Al Borlin Neighborhood and Civic Park

Citizens identified a desire to live and work downtown, attend civic and performing arts functions, participate in recreational activities and shop and dine in local establishments. This site offers unique opportunities in line with these sentiments.

The objective is to activate the underutilized lands near Al Borlin Park, with expanded office, housing and public facilities.

Two alternative scenarios are presented. The primary difference between the two plans is the development in Scenario 2 which reflects a higher density and includes a parking structure.

The diagrams for this area reflect the following design concepts:

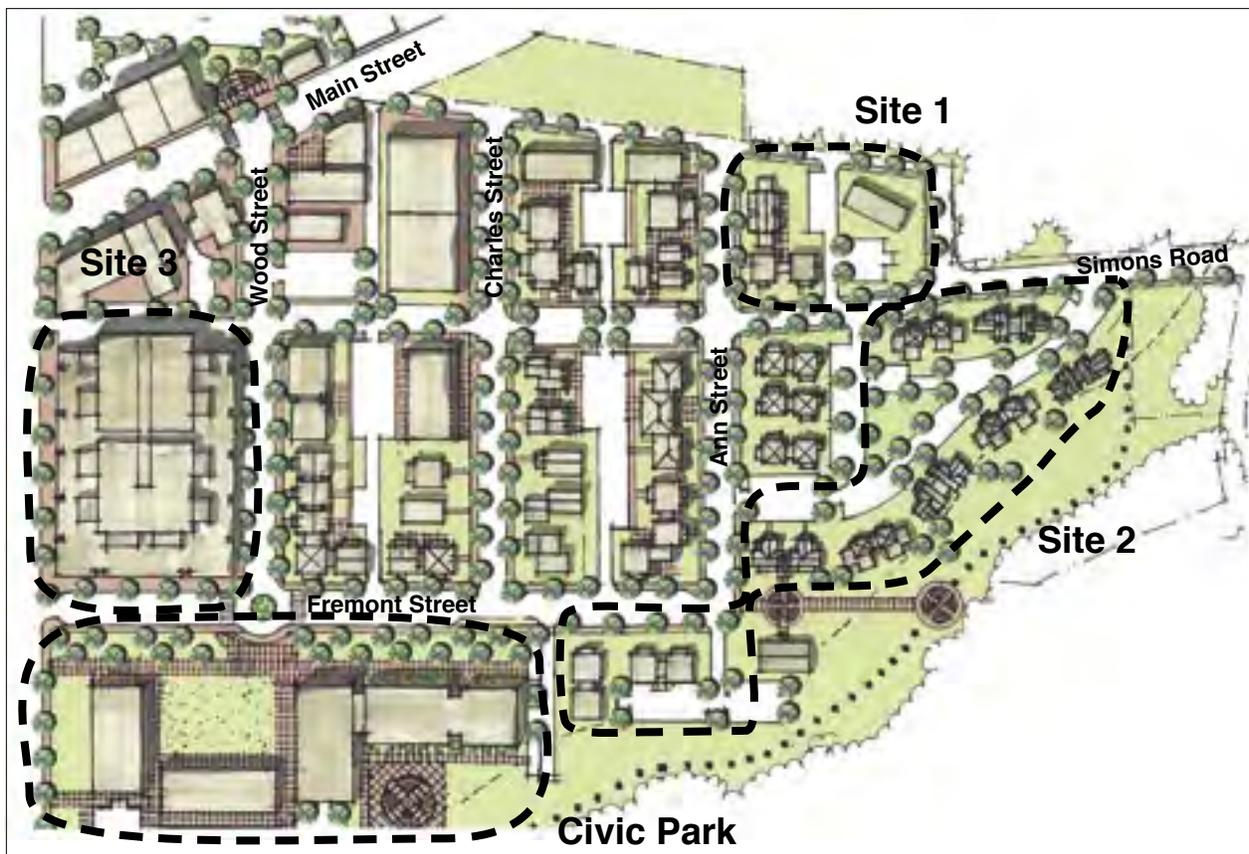
- A civic campus is developed which incorporates the existing school administration building. In this scheme, a group of buildings frames a community green that is visually connected to Main Street. This outdoor space (which makes use of the existing playing field adjacent to the school administration building) provides a place to hold larger community events than the plaza (proposed) on Main Street. The space would be wrapped with a promenade that could also accommodate vendors during festival events or a farmer’s market.
- Mixed-use buildings are envisioned throughout the area. They provide opportunities for live-work units, and other designs with retail / office below and residential units above. These units will help create an animated atmosphere, resulting in increased pedestrian activity.



Site 3: Al Borlin Neighborhood

- Single-family, duplex and multifamily units are provided throughout the area, although they are generally located along the park edge. This creates a transition of higher to lower use activities.
- In Scenario 1 a public surface lot is envisioned between Woods and Ferry. In Scenario 2 this is expanded into a parking structure to help support an expanded civic facility at the community green. The proposed parking structure would also house retail, office and residential units.
- Roadway improvements along Fremont and Woods provide an alternative route to Main / US 2.
- Streetscape and intersection improvements along Fremont, Woods, Charles and Ann Street enhance pedestrian connections to and from Main Street.
- A multi-modal trail is provided along the edge of Al Borlin Park to accommodate recreational and commuter users.

Four development opportunity sites are illustrated within the Al Borlin Neighborhood. They are described in the following text.



Development statistics:

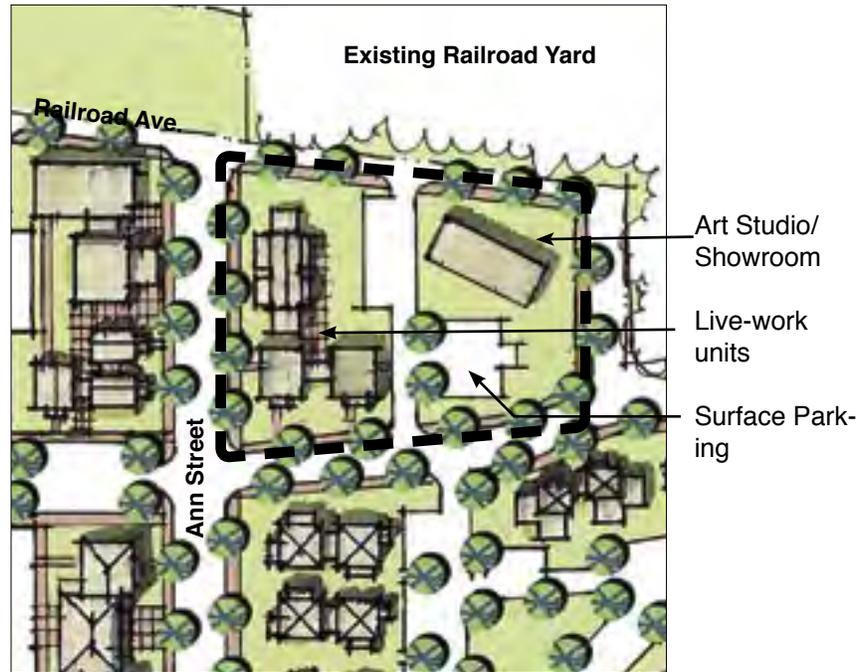
Site Size:	6,800 SF
Live-work Units (13)	12000 SF
Showroom/Studio	3150 SF
Surface Parking	24 spaces



Illustrative Sketch for Borlin Site 1

The one block area borders railroad lands. It provides an opportunity for live-work artist units. The existing building on site could also be rehabbed as an artist studio-showroom.

Surface parking would be provided on site.



Market Feasibility for Borlin Site 1

Site 1 is designed as 14 artist loft spaces with a 3,500 square foot commercial annex. The artist lofts are attached 2-story units with individual ground floor entries. The first floor of each unit is workspace, with living space on the second floor. The lofts themselves are unfinished shell space with utilities and allow the new owners to create the space improvements necessary for their craft. This allows a lower cost than in typical apartment units and keeps costs to an affordable level.

This project is assumed to be supported as an economic development project with below-market funding for the lofts and commercial space. The cost to the end-user artist would be approximately \$530 per month for living space and \$530 per month for workspace, not including taxes and insurance. The average monthly cost after federal income taxes, for the first five years (excluding property tax and insurance) would come to around \$330 per unit because of the federal mortgage deduction. There could also be a deduction from federal income taxes for the cost of principal payments for the workspace used in producing income.

Illustrative Sketch for Borlin Site 2

This five-and-a-half acre site provides the largest redevelopment opportunity in the Al Borlin Park Neighborhood. Although the largest site, much of the site is non-developable due to shoreline regulations along Woods Creek. This allows for a very green development opportunity in the sense that the development would border parklands all along one edge.

Development statistics:

Overall Site:	240000 SF
Buildable Site:	33,000 SF
Multifamily Units (36)	12,000 SF
Surface Parking	72 spaces



It is envisioned this area would redevelop with multifamily residential type buildings. It is also envisioned that a small portion of the overall site would be purchased by the city. Public improvements throughout the site would include multi-modal paths. Additional public improvements that are site specific would include the tot lot, small plaza, gazebo and an overlook opportunity.

The structures that are oriented to the street and the park should be double-fronted. If an excess of two stories is allowed the upper stories should step back from both the street and park fronts. Parking should be located to the interior of the site in parking rooms as illustrated.

There was also discussion regarding the opportunity to provide a small boutique hotel in this area, this option was not illustrated, but would be appropriate.

Market Feasibility for Borlin Site 2

Site 2: 2-Story

The 2-story option on site 2 provides 34 townhouses with 68 parking spaces on the buildable portion of the site, preserving approximately 192,000 square feet in open space. Project cost with land is estimated at \$9.9 million to create a value of \$11.8 million, a return on cost sufficient to warrant interest by developers. At an average wage of \$36,000, it would support 98 construction jobs. At average Monroe projected income for 2012, it would add over \$800,000 in consumer spending, much of which will benefit local business.

Site 2: 2-Story Higher Intensity

The second on site 2 provides 45 townhouses with 90 parking spaces on the buildable portion of the site, preserving approximately 179,000 square feet in open space. Project cost with land is estimated at \$12.6 million to create a value of \$15.6 million, a return on cost sufficient to warrant interest by developers. At an average wage of \$36,000, it would support 129 construction jobs. At average Monroe projected income for 2012, it would add over \$1 million in consumer spending, much of which will benefit local business.

Site 2: 3 to 5 Story

The third option on site 2 provides 96 condominium units and 16 penthouse units with 152 parking spaces on the buildable portion of the site, preserving approximately 178,000 square feet in open space. Project cost with land is estimated at \$20.3 million to create a value of \$25 million, a return on cost sufficient to warrant interest by developers. At an average wage of \$36,000, it would support 218 construction jobs. At average Monroe projected income for 2012, it would add over \$2.6 million in consumer spending, much of which will benefit local business.

Illustrative Sketch Opportunity for Borlin Site 3

This one block site located to the south of Main Street provides an opportunity for mixed use development and a public/private parking structure. Its central location between Main Street and the proposed Civic facility make it a walkable distance for those looking for parking for either locations.



The mixed use component of this facility provides a location for the expanded growth of downtown retail, neighborhood services and residential use. Retail services should be located on the ground floor, while residential units should be located above. It is envisioned these uses would wrap the parking structure, buffering it from the public street.

A funding strategy should be developed for the parking structure that considers a shared effort by both the public and private sector. The private developer should fund the active commercial and residential portions of the structure and the spaces assigned to these uses. While the public sector should fund the public parking spaces.

Development statistics:

Site Area:	35,000 SF
Living Units (34)	50,000 SF
Commercial	31,000 SF
Surface parking	72 spaces
Structured parking	160 spaces



Market Feasibility for Borlin Site 3

Site 3 is the highest intensity option of the four options considered. It consists of two floors of structured parking wrapped on the street by 31,000 square feet of retail/commercial space, with 38 penthouses on 2 floors placed above the structure and an additional 77 spaces of surface parking on-site. The parking structure provides 146 spaces of which 61 are new public parking. Project cost with land is estimated at \$17.5 million (exclusive of public parking cost) to create a value of \$21 million, a return on cost sufficient to warrant interest by developers. At an average wage of \$36,000, it would support 170 construction jobs. It would also create space for approximately 93 permanent jobs in downtown. At average Monroe projected income for 2012, it would add over \$900,000 in consumer spending, much of which will benefit local business.

Historic Main Street Commercial District

- Potential Mixed-Use Parking Structure with Surface Parking
- Parking access off alley
 - Retail and neighborhood services on ground floor
 - Office and/or residential units second floor
 - Third floor set back from facade accommodates residential units

Civic Park Site



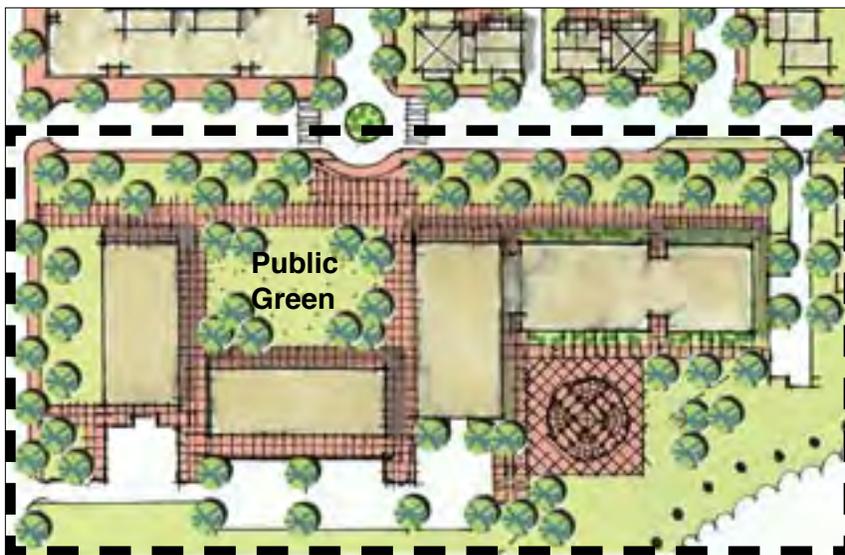
Civic Park Site

During the community workshops and stakeholder sessions, the citizens of Monroe noted the lack of community gathering space downtown for special events. They felt there was a need for a range of interior and exterior gathering spaces of various sizes.

The civic park is proposed to be located along Fremont and Lewis. It terminates Woods Street from Main Street. A complex of buildings is envisioned including the rehabilitation of the historic school administration. New buildings should be designed to accommodate a variety of uses including performance space, theater, public meeting space, civic and non-profit offices. The school administration use could remain on-site or another use could be provided, such as a small boutique hotel.

Two outdoor events spaces are also envisioned. One space would be primarily green open space with a scored concrete surround to accommodate electrical hook-ups and vehicular access for festivals and markets. A more formal space could occur on the park side, this could provide a space for weddings and/or other private celebrations.

Some surface parking could be located on site; underground parking could also be provided under the new facilities. Additional overflow parking for special events could be accommodated in the public parking structure envisioned within Opportunity Site #2.



- Potential Civic Park Complex
- Rehabilitate School Administration Building
 - Provide public green
 - Formal garden plaza
 - New civic buildings frame public green



Public Green at proposed Civic Park.

Site 4: West Main between Madison and Blakeley

Two sites, one to the north and one to the south of the proposed Gateway, provide opportunities for mixed-use development. These new infill buildings could frame the gateway and celebrate arrival into downtown. A small public plaza could be incorporated within the south site.



Site 4: West Main.

13

Implementation

This chapter provides a strategy for implementing the recommendations contained in the City of Monroe Downtown Master Plan. Successful implementation requires a coordinated effort between public and private entities and tools that can facilitate investment from both sectors are addressed. Key players will be property owners and developers, and the City of Monroe.

It is important to recognize that, while the plan suggests specific projects for selected sites, a number of factors will determine if those projects can be executed as illustrated. It is likely that several projects will occur differently, and even in other locations. Some flexibility in the implementation of the specific recommendations therefore should be anticipated.

In this light, individual projects can be modified as specific development opportunities arise. The primary goal is to ensure that property owners and developers uphold the fundamental goals and policies contained in the plan. Maintaining the vision of the overall “framework” of the plan while remaining flexible about specific plan details is the core objective.

The intent is to implement the plan through a variety of means. Public capital investments will be used for street and streetscape improvements and to leverage private investments. The Design Guidelines will provide both guidance and a regulatory framework for new construction for rehabilitation of existing structures. If acquisition of any private lands, buildings or other facilities are needed to implement a specific project, the City will proceed on a basis of “willing buyer, willing seller” and subject to budget constraints.

Organization of the Chapter

This chapter is organized into three basic divisions:

1. General strategies and tools
2. Strategies for specific plan categories
3. Summary matrix

A Bilateral Approach

Specific project concepts are illustrated for selected sites in the plan. These should serve as starting points for implementation. While these are highly recommended concepts, it is important to acknowledge that the plan can also accommodate flexibility and therefore variations on these illustrative sketches should be expected.

Some of those projects are public sector concepts. The intent is that these should serve as catalysts to attract private investment. In the implementation phasing recommendations, these public sector projects are timed with this function in mind. At the same time, there will be cases in which a private sector project comes forward that meets the intent of the plan, but at a time earlier than perhaps anticipated. When this occurs, the city should adjust its own spending priorities to help support the private development, to the extent that is reasonable.

In this respect, the community should use a bilateral approach for implementing the plan: It should be both proactive in leading efforts to implement the plan as described, and it also should be responsive, and react to new opportunities and changing conditions as they arise in the private sector.

A Bilateral Approach also implies that both the public and private sectors must share in the responsibilities of implementation, including funding. While the City of Monroe is a key player in terms of financial tools available, it is essential that downtown property owners and businesses engage in funding parts of the plan as well. In many cases, this will be an individual property owner investing in their land. But, in addition, it will be important for the Downtown, to help fund some projects collectively. This may include participating in some streetscape enhancement programs, pocket parks, and parking landscaping. There are tools described later in this section that may be used for this purpose.

The community should use the Implementation Matrix presented in this chapter, which provides a schedule for specific public projects, as a guide in establishing work program priorities. It also will help private property owners place their improvement projects in the context of potential public investment that may occur in the area. At the same time, the City should be poised to modify strategies to respond to projects that may be proposed by private developers.

Projects to repair or rebuild existing infrastructure offer the best opportunities for implementing the physical components of the plan. For this reason, the City should coordinate maintenance and capital activities Downtown through each and every department. For example, if curbs and sidewalks need to be rebuilt along a Down-

town street, the recommended streetscape treatments should be designed into the project. If funds are not immediately available for pavers, street trees, street furniture, etc., at least the design should account for them and allow them to be easily added later. For any Downtown project, all facilities recommended in this plan should be designed in at the outset, even if funds are not immediately available for their purchase and installation.

Once a major public project has been identified and programmed for implementation, it should be subjected to an open and inclusionary design development process. While the scope of the design process should be commensurate with the project, business persons, property owners and the general public must all have an opportunity to review and comment on project designs. All directly affected property owners shall be notified, and procedural due process shall be followed. Design development and public involvement shall be the responsibility of the City.

In essence, implementation should proceed in the order recommended in the plan and yet the schedule should remain flexible to accommodate changing conditions, especially where opportunities to share construction costs and administration arise. To help the community execute refinements in the implementation schedule in an orderly manner, a series of prioritization criteria is included. The criteria can be applied when such changing conditions warrant their use.

Adopt the Downtown Master Plan

The Downtown Master Plan should serve as a policy document to guide physical design and physical improvements within the downtown study area. In that light, it should be adopted as a part of the City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan 2005-2025.

Key Funding Tools

Monroe has vital and prosperous Downtown businesses. One of the steps that can be taken to assure the success of the Downtown Master Plan is the institution of a legal framework that gives the city options for implementation and funding, and defines exactly which steps should be taken and the appropriate time frame for each step. (Some of these are described in more detail in the Appendix.)

Six key financing mechanisms should be explored for funding improvements:

1. Community Renewal Area

The use of the community renewal area in Washington has been difficult in many communities due to the overlay of case law and State Constitutional limitations on the use of this financing tool, Chapter 35-81 RCW. Several lawsuits have been filed based on the State Constitutional limitation on gifting or using public credit to finance private development. One of these cases involved the specific purchase of property, the installation of public improvements, and then resale of the property by the City. In this case, the City was found to be in violation of the State Constitution, so while the State Law provides this as a tool, any use of this financing mechanism should be thoroughly evaluated by the City Attorney prior to consideration. The limitations peculiar to Washington mean that the primary source of investment in the Downtown will be by the City along the public right-of-way and by private investment.

The Community Renewal Area is a special provision of Washington State law for improvements that will result in increased property or excise taxes as a result of the added value to the property. In a Community Renewal Area, the City can acquire land, make improvements to the infrastructure, and provide incentives to attract users. With this tool, the city can acquire property, make improvements to it and then turn it over to a private entity to further develop the land. Funding for improvements can be provided by bonds that are retired by income derived from taxes on the property involved, from the increase that occurs as a result of the improvements. These may be property tax revenues or excise (sales) taxes.

Note that an increase in the tax rate is not required, since added revenues occur from the value added by the improvements. A residential development, for example, could generate additional property taxes, while a retail use could generate additional sales tax revenues.

The property involved must be determined to be “blighted,” which may mean that it is deteriorated, or obsolete in terms of real estate definitions. Blight also may simply be a condition in which the property is irregularly configured or improperly utilized with respect to the goals of a renewal plan. (This Downtown Plan can serve as that plan.) This tool should be used to:

- Stimulate development of housing and mixed use projects in the downtown, such as along Al Borlin Park.

Supplemental information about the Community Renewal Area law is provided in the Appendix.

2. Local Improvement District

In this mechanism, property owners within a defined area assess themselves to finance improvements that will benefit everyone in the area. A Local Improvement District requires at least 60% of the affected property owners to agree to the approval of the district. Construction bonds may be issued based on the income stream projected from the assessment. This tool enables construction of improvements that can benefit a broader area. It should be used to:

- Construct expanded streetscape enhancements throughout the Downtown
- Install public information signs and gateway improvements
- Enhance other surface lots
- Construct a public parking garage

There also are some other special districts that can be established, such as for development of Convention, Arts and Tourism Facilities. These also are summarized in the Appendix.

3. Special Revenue Funds

A fund used to account for the proceeds of specific revenue sources that are legally restricted to expenditure for specific purposes. They may be used to:

- Finance special public improvement projects, generally one-time expenditures for public art, pocket parks and plazas
- As an alternative mechanism for public information signs and gateway enhancements

4. General Obligation Bonds

These are funded by an assessment. Income from the property tax assessments is used to retire the bonds. These are generally used for larger projects. They should be considered for:

- Construction of a performance space
- Major parks
- As an alternative for parking structure funding

5. Grants

Some key grants may be awarded by federal agencies for public improvements that fit within the guidelines of specific programs. Noteworthy grants are for water resource improvements, enhancements for alternative modes of transportation, and Community Development Block Grants. Others may come from private foundations, typically for smaller projects. These may be used for:

- Development of special residential projects
- Streetscape and circulation improvements that enhance alternative modes of transportation

6. Private investment

The greatest source of investment will be the private sector. Private investment will be encouraged by adoption of the plan and will be further stimulated by regulatory and financial incentives that may be available from time to time.

One such incentive provided in Washington State law is the designation of a “Community Renewal Area,” which is codified in the Revised Washington Code Section 35.81 (RCW 35.81).

Private sector investment can be stimulated by a variety of tax incentives as well as zoning “bonuses.” Some of the tax incentives and loan enhancements are described in the Appendix.

Prioritization Process and Criteria

Recommendations for prioritization of improvements will be included in a matrix later in this chapter. However, prioritization should be considered to be dynamic and should be revised, when necessary, in response to plans and projects by other agencies and individuals that may present opportunities to combine efforts and maximize benefits.

In general, the community should set a high priority on an improvement when it can help support private development that is consistent with the vision and economic development goals of the downtown.

However, there will still be times when decision-makers need to reassess the priority of a recommended action or one of the tasks necessary to implement it. When this occurs, the City should use the following criteria. Projects that meet several of the criteria should be given the highest priority for near-term implementation.

The following criteria will be applied in creating the Implementation Prioritization Matrix.

Financing Criteria

1. The **project will generate funds** to cover portions of development costs. (For example, resulting uses will generate rental income or sales tax revenues.)
2. The **project will leverage investment** from other sources. (For example, property owners will finance a portion of sidewalk construction costs through an assessment program.)
3. **Grant funds are available** to cover portions of development costs.
4. The project **fits within a larger capital improvement project**, such that cost savings will be realized. (For example, sidewalks could be constructed when a street is to be repaved.)
5. **Funding for maintenance** of the improvement is available. (This is an important consideration for streetscape, gateways and parks improvements.)

Location Criteria

6. The project will have **high public visibility**. The high priority areas are:
 - Main Street
 - Lewis Street
 - Al Borlin Park Neighborhood

Ownership and Project Control Criteria

7. The project is **under the appropriate ownership** or control.
8. The project **ownership or control can be acquired** with reasonable effort.

Public Benefits Criteria

9. The project will **provide a direct benefit** to local residents. (For example, a new park or public building.)
10. The project will **serve multiple users** or interest groups. (For example, an outdoor plaza that may be used by local residents as well as visitors and that may be used for civic celebrations.)

Relationship to Other Projects Criteria

11. The project will **connect to existing public improvements**. (For example, extension of an existing sidewalk into adjoining blocks.)

12. The project will **enhance existing improvements** and will not cause other desired improvements to become obsolete.

13. The project provides **opportunities to connect with other future public improvements**. (For example, improvements along Woods Street to Civic Park)

14. The project will **function well upon its completion** and later phases of construction are not required for this phase to perform adequately.

Compliance with Community Plans and Administration

15. The project **will help to accomplish broader goals** of the community.

16. The project **fits within work plans** of downtown organizations and city staff.

17. **Adequate administrative oversight is available** for the project.

Prioritization Categories

Based on consideration of the criteria described above, priorities for implementation are arranged in the following five categories:

Priority A

These are the highest priority. They should be implemented as soon as possible. Many of these are items that must be set in place before other later projects can be accomplished. For example, adopting the Downtown Master Plan as official policy is an early step that should be taken. (Generally scheduled for years 1-2 of implementation.)

Priority B

These are also of high priority, but usually require additional ground work to accomplish. In some cases, a project designated Priority A must be implemented first. (Generally scheduled for years 2-4 of implementation.)

Priority C

These are projects that require extensive ground work, fund-raising and coordination with other groups. (Generally scheduled for years 3-5 of implementation.)

Priority D

Priority D projects are often very complex projects and require that a strong market be established first. They also include later phases of special projects that may have been initiated in early stages. (Generally scheduled for years 5-10 of implementation.)

Priority E

These are long-range projects, final phases of staged improvements, and more complex undertakings. Some are feasible only when market conditions are in place to support them. (Generally scheduled for years 10-15 of implementation.)

Housing Strategy

The plan recommends development of housing in a range of product types and prices, including market rate and affordable categories. Construction of new townhouses in mixed use complexes, as well as adaptive reuse of upper floors in older commercial buildings are envisioned.

These product types should be promoted in the downtown area:

- High amenity, market rate units, historic
- High amenity, market rate units, new
- Mid-range market rate units, new
- Affordable units, historic
- Affordable units, new
- Artists “loft” housing
- Seniors housing

Creating projects that combine these residential types is particularly encouraged.

Some obstacles to housing development are:

- Downtown housing products remain somewhat unproven in the area, and therefore prices are not at a level that attract developers who could otherwise build more easily in outlying areas
- Assembly of parcels may be difficult in some areas without causing prices to inflate and thereby diminish feasibility.
- Lack of understanding about solving difficult adaptive reuse projects may discourage developers
- A perception that building codes make rehabilitation of older buildings more difficult

With these issues in mind, these actions are recommended:

1. Promote construction of new housing units.

Economic studies indicate that demographics and market conditions would support increased residential development in Downtown Monroe. However, for new housing product, it is preferred to bring a group of units on line together, in order to create a “critical mass” that buyers will perceive as a neighborhood and it should offer a rich “package” of amenities. One substantial project would help to “jump start” construction of residential development.

Several sites are identified in the plan that are viable candidates for this project, especially some within the Al Borlin Park Neighborhood. Each of these should be explored in detail for feasibility of acquisition.

2. Promote adaptive reuse for housing.

Downtown residential projects are often more feasible as adaptive reuse developments, in which historic buildings are renovated. The resulting housing is a special niche product that a specific segment of the market seeks and prefers over conventional single detached housing. The following steps should be taken:

Promote special provisions in the International Building Code related to adaptive reuse.

The State of Washington uses the International Building Code, which makes provisions for improvements to older buildings, especially historic structures. The City of Monroe has adopted this new code.

The City should promote use of these provisions. A first step is to assure that City building code officials receive training in this category. Training for developers and property owners also should be scheduled. A short summary of the provisions for older buildings should be provided on the City web site as well.

3. Revise Municipal Code

Although the existing Municipal Code currently permits some mixed use development, revisions will be necessary to ensure consistency and continuity between the Downtown Master Plan and regulatory ordinances.

The revisions should be set to accommodate the mix of uses and the densities of development that are illustrated in this plan. In addition, a density bonus should be established for projects that include affordable housing.

Parking Strategy

(See Chapter 7: Auto Circulation & Parking) Parking should be provided in balance with other functional requirements of Downtown. To that end, making the best use of existing parking resources is the highest priority. However, with the additional uses anticipated in the plan, some more parking spaces will be needed. These are the key implementations strategies:

1. Improve efficiency of existing on-street and off-street parking inventory.

Develop cooperative agreements for sharing of privately owned lots.

There are several large surface parking lots that are not efficiently used during the work week. Cooperative agreements between the City and owners would help facilitate broader use. This would include arrangements for landscaping and signage.

Improve enforcement of parking

The City should consider parking management as part of an overall economic development strategy for downtown and pro-actively manage and enforce parking regulations to ensure the optimum utilization and turnover of available spaces.

Identify Public Parking Opportunities

Signage directing visitors to public parking structures and/or surface lots should be incorporated in an overall wayfinding and signage program to ensure easy and convenient access.

Formulate a Downtown Employee Parking Program

While retail and residential parking is important, employee parking that is shared is necessary to allow public access to the most convenient spaces in front of and adjoining Downtown business. By concentrating employee parking, the intensity of street frontage land use can be increased by eliminating the need for every site to have its own dedicated parking. It is suggested that the City, through the local improvement district, construct employee parking with funding coming from a downtown business improvement district, renewal bonding, and through the purchase of time shared spaces from individual businesses. Other funding options include sale of parking spaces on a monthly or yearly basis.

2. Construct a parking structure.

As a higher density of commercial area is achieved in the downtown a parking structure should be considered. Parking structures are the most efficient use of land that accommodates a large number of public parking spaces. New prototypes for public parking facilities have been established and constructed throughout the country, which include parking structures that contain retail and office uses along the edges of the structure. This promotes additional commercial development, but also allows the building to more fully integrate with adjacent development.

Structures can be financed through the issue of bonds or a Downtown LID district. In addition, lodging tax generated from a cultural arts district can also fund parking structures that serve public facilities. The plan illustrates a parking structure that links Main Street with the proposed civic facilities at the School Administration site. Because this structure would also serve civic uses, it also may be possible to fund a part of that facility with a municipal bond.

Civic Facilities Strategy

Civic Center Master Plan

The City should undertake an inventory and analysis of existing facilities to identify appropriate use for the civic park. The facility Civic Center could be designed for a variety of uses and contain second story office space for City and nonprofit agencies. Although the Downtown Master Plan contains recommendations for a specific site, alternative locations should be explored to leverage other potential purchase opportunities. Fund-raising efforts should coincide with a bond issue to ensure timely design and construction of the project. In addition, park improvements, pedestrian and streetscape improvements and other landscape projects should be coordinated to fully integrate the facility with the overall vision for Downtown.

The State of Washington also enables Public Facilities Districts (PFDs) as municipal corporations that have independent taxing authority and are taxing districts under the state constitution.

Streetscape, Road Improvements

Any improvements targeted for the public right-of way, whether initiated by Public Works or other utility companies, should be coordinated through a proposed Downtown Plan's City Agency Coordinator to ensure that opportunities for tangential improvements are not

bypassed. For example, new water mains and/or cable lines may create an opportunity for streetscape improvements and allow both projects to benefit from coordinated funding efforts.

Streetscape improvement projects should be phased and should be linked to other improvement and construction projects, including sewer and water utilities.

Main Street and Lewis Street are considered the primary entrances to the city, and should be considered a priority. They also link to US 2. Street reconfiguration should include streetscape and gateway improvements.

Fremont Street and Woods Street streetscape improvements should also be considered a priority to initiate redevelopment within the Al Borlin Park Neighborhood and to show the city's commitment to redevelopment in this area.

These projects could be funded through a Local Improvement District.

Commercial Development Strategy

The Market Summary indicates that a growing population could support expanded retail opportunities within the Downtown.

The City should create a welcoming climate for investment by providing information that will enable entrepreneurs and small business owners to make reasoned decisions regarding future development.

Conduct annual inventories of Housing, Retail, and Office Use

This allows prospective developers and businesses to understand the supply and thus the need or demand for various land uses. It shows the opportunities as well as the potential competition, and the trends of current redevelopment. This could be an information function of the renewal agency and should be coordinated with the economic development department. Using the City's GIS data system, annual inventories of land use should be conducted and data bases updated to create a comprehensive data base. Prospective developers often seek this type of information to understand potential future development patterns that directly affect initial investments.

Develop a policy for formula retailers

In order to preserve the unique character of Downtown Monroe and to ensure that new development does not threaten existing businesses, the City of Monroe should understand the economic impacts formula retailers would have on existing Downtown businesses. Nationwide, large big-box retailers typically located on the periphery of a city are exploring urban locations. Both Target and Wal-Mart have generated prototypes for new urban developments that offer reduced floor heights and parking requirements along with more contextual architecture and landscape designs that responds to urban sites.

In Carbondale, Colorado, Town Trustees adopted a Community Assessment Ordinance that requires proposed retail developments to submit information and meet specific criteria prior to approval. This ordinance applies to any retail development larger than 15,000 square feet in neighborhood business districts or larger than 30,000 square feet elsewhere.

The City of Monroe should consider a conditional use policy that allows the careful and strategic integration of formula retailers.

In addition, the City should consider how the project would affect the availability of affordable housing (i.e. whether new low-wage retail jobs would create a shortage of affordable units) and also whether the economic impacts, architectural character, landscape features and parking configurations reflect the vision established by the City of Monroe Downtown Master Plan.

Streamline Development Procedures and Approvals Process

Part of attracting quality development to downtown consists in making the process of approvals transparent, responsible and reasonably expeditious. Typically this is done through promoting interdepartmental cooperation on development approvals and appointing a lead person for each application to guide it through the process. Complicated approvals, where the process is akin to opening a series of doors without knowing what will be found, tend to dampen the enthusiasm of prospective developers and businesses hoping to locate in a city.

The City has worked diligently to streamline the submittal process and should continue to identify additional opportunities to improve the review approval process.

The City also should establish a categorical exception in the permit process for projects that include infill and mixed use development in the Downtown. This would facilitate meeting State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) requirements. This exception is permitted when the resulting infill would increase density within a designated area in a manner that is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Develop a Vacant Land and Derelict Building Inventory

Vacant land and derelict buildings offer opportunities for change and redevelopment. In order to seize these opportunities it is necessary to inventory and map the locations of vacant land and derelict buildings and then identify appropriate uses through the planning process. This can be accomplished using the GIS database from the county to identify and track these sites. Similar to creating a comprehensive land use data base, the City should also inventory existing downtown buildings by use and occupancy.

In order for the City to remain competitive in attracting potential developers, the City should post land inventories on the city's web site, which allows developers to query available land by lot size, land use, etc. Maintaining an accurate data base will allow both in-state and out-of-state investors to easily access important information quickly and take advantage of current technology to make reasoned, informed decisions regarding development in Monroe.

Technical Business and Retail Assistance

There are funding sources listed in the Appendix for assistance to small business and start-up business. There is also a federal program to help small businesses compete for federal supply contracts. Small start-up retail businesses typically need expert assistance in areas such as store layout, lighting design, inventory controls and information systems for understanding consumer preferences. One means successfully used by the Main Streets Program is the sharing of computer data on sales by local retailers, giving them a similar information management capability as the larger all-in-one-store retailers.

The City should also encourage participation in technical assistance. One vehicle for implementing this could be through a Small Business Investment Corporation which is chartered to offer technical assistance to local business and is overseen by the Small Business Administration. An SBIC could offer technology loans to help businesses acquire the needed hardware and software for such a system.

Establish Renewal Agency

The City should create a Renewal Agency that assumes responsibility for infill and redevelopment projects throughout the City as well as for Downtown.

Historic Preservation Strategy

(See Chapter 5: Historic Preservation)

1. Historic Preservation Commission

The City should establish a Historic Preservation Commission which would work to promote rehabilitation of historic resources. The Commission may be solely an advisory body that provides information about historic preservation, or it may also be assigned a design review responsibility.

2. Survey of Historic Structures

The City of Monroe should undertake a survey of historic structures to inventory important and contributing Downtown buildings. The survey would assist the City and property owners in securing funding for potential renovation projects based on the historical significance of the buildings and/or property.

3. Design Review Training

Training for elected and appointed officials and city staff should occur on a rotational cycle to ensure that all persons involved in design review tasks understand design issues and concerns. Training could be divided into three separate categories, and each category would be reviewed in alternating years. This would allow newly elected/appointed officials and new staff to be trained in a timely manner.

Key Roles of Implementation Actors in Plan Administration

A variety of City departments and commissions should consult the plan when preparing work programs in the Downtown, as well as when reviewing proposals by others. This includes Department of Community Development, Public Works, Planning Commission and future Historic Preservation Commission, as well as the City Administrator's office. An important goal of each entity should be to seek ways to share work efforts in fund-raising, construction coordination and management. This may require that the timing of a specific project be adjusted to ensure best use of shared resources.

In addition, the City should use this document to develop its yearly budget and work program. Each year, the work program should include implementation of specific recommendations contained within this plan.

Implementation Monitoring

While many individual staff and commission members will have opportunities to implement individual elements of the plan, it is important that one office be responsible for monitoring overall implementation and for coordinating various work efforts. This responsibility should potentially be awarded to the Executive Director of the Monroe Downtown Foundation (DREAM). In this role, the director will establish a work plan to coincide with the city's fiscal calendar and identify key projects and phasing, if necessary. The Director will coordinate projects with the City Administrator and other personnel involved in implementation.

Project Facilitation

This function would be to assist property owners and business persons in the development of projects of all sizes that serve to implement the Downtown Plan. Once a project is planned and designed, a City or Foundation staff member would be assigned to guide it through the review and permitting process. This staff person would also furnish information and assist the property owner in researching qualifying grants, and in securing technical design assistance should it be needed.

City Agency Coordination

The City Department of Community Development should annually generate a list of capital projects for the Downtown area. These projects must be coordinated with other City departments and outside agencies, and must reflect the goals, policies and recommendations of the Downtown Plan. Once the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) list is generated, it will be submitted to the City for prioritization and funding. Selected projects will be incorporated into the annual City CIP and into the Comprehensive Plan.

Renewal Administration

The City should consider an urban renewal function that would allow downtown businesses and property owners to take advantage of grants and other special financing mechanisms. In addition, land and buildings could be assembled for public projects that would serve to implement the Downtown Plan.

Housing Authority

The Snohomish County Housing Authority and Housing Hope have extensive information regarding the redevelopment potential for specific properties both in and adjacent to the Downtown core. They should be integrated into the planning and review process to ensure that specific residential projects targeted for Downtown are consistent with the overall goals for the community.

Recruitment

The City should consider a recruitment function to seek out and identify developers and specific businesses for the Downtown area. The primary objective would be to continue to strengthen the business fabric of Downtown, and to attract investment to implement specific components of the Downtown Plan.

Flood Management

There are two key resources available to the City for Mill Creek. These are the Mill Creek Flood Control District and the Monroe District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. These organizations can provide leadership in the planning and management of flood control improvements.

Small Business Investment Corps.

Small Business Investment Corporations (SBIC's) are business development venture funds for business creation and development that are regulated by the Small Business Administration. The federal government will match local funding at a three to one ratio. What this means is that if local investors, banks and others form a SBIC with \$1 million in start-up funding, it may be possible to get grants of up to \$3 million to match. Since the plan calls not only for infrastructure, but also new businesses to provide the services that are desired by residents, the formation and operation of a Monroe SBIC could be a means for creating and retaining business in the Downtown area. SBIC's are allowed to use funds for investment in small business and to act as an advisory resource. This means that the SBIC employees could fund and advise businesses on issues such as effective use of information technology, effective retailing practices, financial management, employee management, efficient use of resources, etc. A committee should be appointed to research the feasibility of setting up an SBIC and work with local and state financial institutions to seek initial funding.

Design Review

The companion document of design guidelines for historic properties, as well as the general guidelines for infill and redevelopment which are presented in the plan, should be applied to improvement projects in the Downtown. By applying the guidelines, property owners can be assured that their individual investments will contribute to a greater whole, in that each project will be compatible with its neighbors. This also serves to protect investment, with the benefit of all properties more likely through consistent application of the design guidelines.

Design review may be conducted by staff, in an administrative process, or it may be by a council-appointed commission. In the interest of expediting approvals, an administrative review system should be given priority for consideration.

Implementation Matrix

The following matrix summarizes the key projects recommended in the Downtown Master Plan, indicates the lead agencies that should pilot the project, suggests financing sources and indicates relative timing. The Matrix serves as a starting point for planning execution of these specific improvement activities, but it should be understood that changing conditions and new information or opportunities will affect specific recommendations.

Note: This Implementation Matrix should be considered a dynamic management tools.

The entries in the Implementation Matrix at the time of drafting of the plan are initial recommendations. These will change as the plan evolves.

Other details, such as agency leads, and funding sources, should be added as more detailed decisions are made.

Priority Categories

- Priority A: Highest Priority, projects should be initiated to ensure compliance with the Downtown Plan: 1-2 years
- Priority B: High Priority, but requires background research. In some cases, a priority A project must be implemented first, 2-4 years
- Priority C: Requires extensive research and preparation, fund-raising and coordination with other groups necessary, 3-5 years
- Priority D: Complex projects that require investment and coordination, 5-10 years
- Priority E: Long range projects, final phases of staged improvements and complex undertakings. These projects ultimately fulfill the version for Downtown and are feasible only when initial investments and improvements have been completed and when market conditions support them, 10-15 years.

Miscellaneous

Recommended Actions	Priority	Year Completed	Lead	Funding	Notes
1. Adopt Downtown Master Plan	A	2008	City		
2. Adopt amendments to comprehensive plan	A	2008	City		
3. Revise Code for consistency with Downtown Plan	A	2008	City		

Historic Preservation

Recommended Actions	Priority	Year Completed	Lead	Funding	Notes
1. Adopt Design Guidelines	B	2008	City		
2. Establish Preservation Program	B	2010	City		
3. Adopt Preservation Ordinance	B	2010	City		
4. Establish Main Street Program	A	2009	DREAM		
5. Historic Society	B	2011	DREAM		

Pedestrian & Bicycle Circulation

Recommended Actions	Priority	Year Completed	Lead	Funding	Notes
1. Provide streetscape enhancements: benches, planters, waste receptacles	B	2010+	City		Phased
2. Install street trees	B	2010+	City/ DREAM		Phased
3. Connect local and regional trail systems	C	2012	City/ Snohomish & King County		
4. Install bike routes: Fremont, Woods, & Ann	B	2011	City		
5. Install bike lanes: portions of Main & Lewis	B	2011	City		

+ Notes that this project is on-going, spanning several years in phases.

Automobile Circulation & Parking

Recommended Actions	Priority	Year Completed	Lead	Funding	Notes
1. Main Street Improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install gateway improvements at Fremont & US 2 • Install and maintain street trees west of Madison & east of the railroad tracks • Install intersection improvements • Construct roundabout at Fremont • Install directional signage 	B	2011			
2. Lewis Street Improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install gateway improvement at US 2 • Install and maintain street trees. • Install intersection improvements at Lewis & Fremont • Provide street section ROW improvements 	B	2011			
3. Fremont Street Improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install gateway improvement at Main • Install intersection improvements • Install and maintain street trees • Reconfigure street section 	B	2011			
4. Woods Street Improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install intersection improvements at Fremont & Main • Install and maintain street trees • Reconfigure street section 	C	2012			
5. Ann Street Improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install and maintain street trees • Reconfigure street section 	C	2012			
6. Blakeley Street <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install and maintain street trees 	C	2013			
7. Charles Street <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install and maintain street trees • Reconfigure street section 	C	2013			
8. Ferry Street Improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install and maintain street trees • Reconfigure street section 	B	2012			
9. US 2 Improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install gateway improvements at Main & Lewis • Install and maintain street trees on south side of road 	B	2011			

Infrastructure

Recommended Actions	Priority	Year Completed	Lead	Funding	Notes
1. Replace existing 4" and 6" water mains	A	2009	City		
2. Replace clay sanitary/storm sewer pipes	C	2012	City		

Public Places

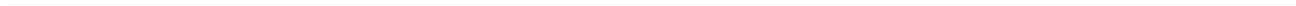
Recommended Actions	Priority	Year Completed	Lead	Funding	Notes
1. Al Borlin Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install pedestrian & bike trails • Install park overlook at the end of Fremont • Install water feature on west side of Woods Creek • Install civic plaza 	B	2011			
2. Small Plazas & Pocket Parks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install entry features on corner of Main & US 2 • Install small plazas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Main/Fremont - Main @ Historical Society 	B	2010+			
3. Develop civic park/plaza or festival lot at School Administration site	B	2011			
4. Adopt policy to allocate % of construction costs for public buildings to public art	A	2009			
5. Adopt incentive program for private individuals to donate or loan art to be used in public places	AQ	2009			

+ Notes that this project is on-going, spanning several years in phases.

Wayfinding & Public Signs

Recommended Actions	Priority	Year Completed	Lead	Funding	Notes
1 Develop Sign Master Plan	A	2009	City		
2 Install Level I Signage - Downtown Gateway Indicators	B	2010+	City		
3 Install Level II Signage - Directional Signage / Resource Locators	A	2009+	City		
4 Install Level III Signage - Regulatory Locators	A	2009+	City		
5 Install Level IV Signage - Pedestrian Directories	B	2010+	City		

+ Notes that this project is on-going, spanning several years in phases.



Appendix - 1

Workshop Summary #1



Workshop #1 Summary

Downtown Master Plan and Design Guidelines City of Monroe, Washington

A "Vision" is a general description of what the community wants to be and how it will appear at some point in the future.

Overall Project Summary

The City of Monroe is embarking on a process to develop a Downtown Master Plan and Design Guidelines for improvements in the city center.

The community seeks to revitalize the downtown area, while also working to make sure the future development reflects the character and lifestyle that first attracted residents to Monroe. This objective presents a challenge: How to plan for the future, while respecting the past and fitting with the community's current values and vision. In planning for the area, it will be important to listen to community members, grasp the essence of the character of the area, and create plan concepts and guidelines that express the design traditions of Downtown Monroe, while meeting contemporary needs and market trends. It is anticipated that the area will become a focus of specialty retail, dining and entertainment within a design character that reflects its history.

Community participation is the most fundamental concept of this planning effort.

Summary of August 2, 2007 Design Charrette.

The charrette provided participants an opportunity to describe the current conditions of downtown Monroe as well as envision the future downtown area. The first exercise provided an opportunity for individuals to answer several questions related to their future vision of Monroe. They then worked in teams where they identified opportunities and issues on a map of the downtown area. The following topics were discussed and noted: character of downtown,



Team Three discusses options for Exercises #2.

parking, traffic, trails, environmental, and the location, use and quality of infill development. After the exercises were completed each group assigned a team member to present the principle ideas from the exercise.

Exercise #1: Downtown Monroe Vision

This individual exercise asked participants to create a "vision" of what the community wants to be and how it will appear at some point in the future. Six questions were posed on the exercise sheet. These ideas appeared with the most frequency.

#1: What would you like Downtown Monroe to be known for?

- Small town historic character
- Interesting appealing shops
- Pedestrian friendly

#2: If you could keep one thing the same in Downtown Monroe, what would it be?

- Small town charm
- Historic atmosphere
- Smoke stack

#3: If you could change one thing about Downtown Monroe, what would it be?

- The parking constraints, especially on Main Street
- The traffic congestion

- Create a high quality planted and cohesive streetscape with gateways and informative signage
- #4: In your opinion what is the biggest issue facing Downtown Monroe:
- The parking constraints
 - The traffic congestion
 - How to create sustainable business development in the downtown area

- #5: Do you have any concerns regarding the type and quality of development in Downtown Monroe?
- Quality of commercial and retail development (maintain a diverse mix). No "big box" stores
 - Development must be long term and not short sited
 - Development must retain Monroe's small town feel



Individual Exercise #1

- #6: What do you imagine Downtown Monroe would be like in 15 years?
- Clean, exciting, green and vibrant
 - Historic resources must be retained
 - Connections to Woods Creek and Skykomish River via bike paths and trails
 - Increase in mixed use projects

Exercise 2: Downtown Vision

This team exercise divided the downtown study area into five sub-areas. The group was asked to collaborate and note their vision for each area in the year 2015. Many of the team comments are noted below.

Area 1:

- Commercial and retail center with a cohesive architecture on Main Street
- Retain historic character
- Create niche market
- Pedestrian friendly with amenities such as street trees, landscaping, benches, garbage cans, wider sidewalks with corner bumps outs.
- Public art and green space
- Additional parking
- Less traffic congestion, especially the commercial trucks
- Diversity of small business types (shop, dine, live and work)
- Farmer's Market
- Extended business hours

Area 2:

- Parks and trails that connect downtown to Woods Creek and Skykomish River
- Mixed use development that would include residential, commercial, office, and retail
- Kid and family friendly
- Public facility-performing arts
- Apply green building principles
- Underutilized-relocate industrial

Area 3:

- Restrict commercial trucks through the residential side streets
- Establish safe pedestrian travel along and across Lewis Street
- Create continuity between the commercial buildings of the area and Main Street while retaining the residential homes
- Create a gateway on Lewis Street to announce arrival into the downtown area
- Enhance streetscape
- Art and pocket parks



Team Two discusses options for Exercise 2.

Area 4: (Group's visions differed in this area)

- Emphasize residential including multifamily
- Services business and office
- A park should be added with possible outdoor theatre
- Alley improvements
- Enhance pedestrian connections
- New post office
- Parking opportunities

Area 5: (Group's visions differed in this area)

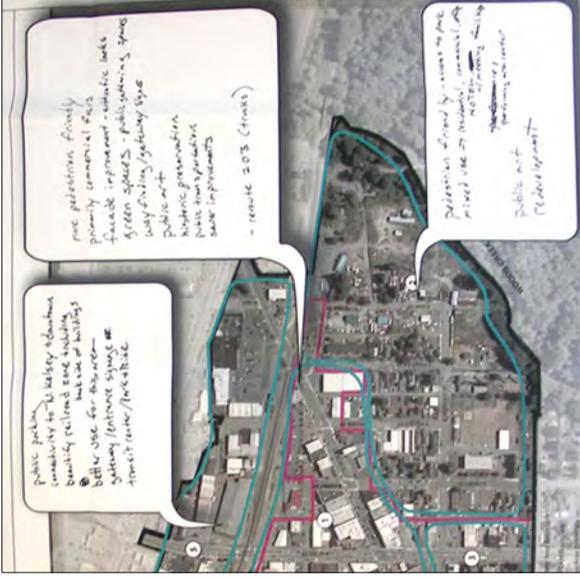
- Keep grocery store
- Provide pedestrian connections to downtown
- Visually enhance; gateway, streetscape, signage, public art, connectivity
- Enhance railroad zone with trail and landscaping
- Build parking lots with potential for "park and ride" to Steven Pass
- Promote Office, hotel, bowling alley, mini golf, farmer's market, rural types services, and retail uses

Exercise 3: Opportunities, Issues, and Ideas

This team exercise prompted groups to locate and describe opportunities and issues within the downtown area as well as other ideas. The highlights brought forth included:

Opportunities:

- The development of the area that runs alongside Woods Creek into a park and mixed use.



Team Exercise #2

- Develop the school district administration site
- Create a cohesive alley network that is better suited for pedestrians
- Establish the Main Street area as a financial center
- Parking opportunities
- Pocket park at "curves" & firehouse Grill
- promote railroad oriented development
- Performing arts near Borlin Park
- Alley development
- Train themed transit center
- Heritage enrichment
- Promote recreational opportunities for all ages
- Expand commercial and high density residential south of downtown
- Promote cultural diversity

Issues:

- Traffic congestion throughout the downtown area
- Deficiency of parking throughout the downtown area
- Shortage of places to sit on Main Street
- Accessibility to Woods Creek and Skykomish River area (ADA)
- Incomplete sidewalks
- Lack of design standards
- Wayfinding
- Lack of public restrooms in the Al Borlin Park
- Accessibility (ADA)
- Maintenance along RR lines
- Infrastructure



Groups prepare for Exercise 3.

Ideas:

- Mixed use with affordable housing in current industrial area
- Build a public gathering area that could be used for special events and local festivals
- Establish park and trail connections along Woods Creek to Skykomish River
- Widen sidewalks along Main Street
- Build a transit center along the railway for regional commuters and tourists
- Build elevated walkways over both Highway 2 and the railway
- Provide downtown restrooms
- Promote special events and festival
- Provide seating areas
- Provide a gateway Hotel
- Provide upscale grocery/organic food store
- Provide hotel, recreational connectivity and trails to park
- Provide trail connection from downtown to Skykomish
- promote historic preservation programs
- Provide framers market
- Enhance streetscape with awnings
- provide visually appealing murals
- Promote live music venues



Exercise 3



Team Four explains their ideas.

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Please join us for the next Public Workshop where you can help to determine the character of redevelopment and improvement opportunities downtown!

Date: September 20, 2007

Appendix - 2

Workshop Summary #2



Workshop #2 Summary

Downtown Master Plan and Design Guidelines

City of Monroe, Washington

A "Vision" is a general description of what the community wants to be and how it will appear at some point in the future.

Overall Project Summary

The City of Monroe is embarking on a process to develop a Downtown Master Plan and Design Guidelines for improvements in the city center.

The community seeks to revitalize the downtown area, while also working to make sure the future development reflects the character and lifestyle that first attracted residents to Monroe. This objective presents a challenge: How to plan for the future, while respecting the past and fitting with the community's current values and vision. In planning for the area, it will be important to listen to community members, grasp the essence of the character of the area, and create plan concepts and guidelines that express the design traditions of Downtown Monroe, while meeting contemporary needs and market trends. It is anticipated that the area will become a focus of specialty retail, dining and entertainment within a design character that reflects its history.

Community participation is the most fundamental concept of this planning effort.

Summary of September 20, 2007 Design Charrette.

The agenda for the evening:

Workshop Summary & Presentation

- Introductions
- Order of the evening
- Workshop #1 Summary
 - Design Framework Map (See Page 2)
 - Historic Character Economics
 - Parking & Circulation
- Presentation - Downtown Design Character and Design Guidelines

Design Exercise - Design Concepts - Building Character

Team Presentations

Questions and Next Steps

Design Exercise: Design Concepts & Building Character

The design exercise first asked participants to place "game pieces" in strategic locations to display the desired future development type, scale, and density in the areas identified on the Framework Map. Each "game piece" represented one of the following project types:

- Multifamily
- Civic areas with open space
- Mixed use
- Plazas
- Parks
- Parking areas
- Commercial/Retail

The participants were next asked to supplement the "game pieces" with photographs displaying a particular character that they envisioned. The following is a summary of this exercise.

Group 1

Historic Main Street:

- Mixed use development.
- Open space with plaza.
- Park with circular stage.
- Parking with buffered landscaping.

Borlin Park Neighborhood:

- Parking with buffered landscaping within park east of Woods Creek.
- Trail/bike path with landscaped edge that connects with trail running next to train tracks.
- Residential development with open space and parking.
- Hotel and commercial building with parking.
- Outdoor eating terraces.

Rails & Road Neighborhood:

- Landscape buffered trail/bike path.
- Train depot.
- Multiple commercial sites with plazas.



Team members consider different options.

Group 2

Historic Main Street:

- Multiple residential developments.
- Train depot.
- Open space with plaza for gathering and farmers markets.

Borlin Park Neighborhood:

- Trail/bike path with landscaped edge.
- Recreational facilities and performing arts center.
- Extensive residential developments.
- Bulb outs at key intersections.
- Three story hotel with landscaped buffer.
- Multifamily village with retail base.
- Plaza with fountain.

Rails & Road Neighborhood:

- Retail shops.
- Gateway parks.

Group 3

Historic Main Street:

- Commercial buildings with upscale boutique retail at street level with parking.
- Three story mixed use building with retail on ground floor and condos on upper stories.

Borlin Park Neighborhood:

- Trail/bike path with bike rental shop.
- Commercial/mixed use with parking.
- Retail/business with storefronts at street level.
- Townhouse multifamily development in a village character.

Rails & Road Neighborhood:

- Open wood framed building for farmers market with parking.
- Downtown Neighborhood:
 - High density residential.



A completed exercise sheet with "game pieces" and character identifying photographs.

Group 4:

Historic Main Street:

- Upscale boutique retail shops at street level.
- Parking with landscape buffering.
- Streetscape improvements.
- Borlin Park Neighborhood:**
- Hotel/convention center.
- RV parking area.
- Trail/bike path.
- Open wood framed building for farmers market with parking.

Rails & Road Neighborhood:

- Two story multifamily with landscaped front.
- Plaza with fountain and areas for seating.
- Downtown Neighborhood:**
- Mixed use development.
- Parking with landscaped buffering.



Participants consider options for the exercise.



A completed exercise sheet with "game pieces" and character identifying photographs.



Team members present their ideas.

For more information contact:

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email:
bswanson@ci.monroe.wa.us

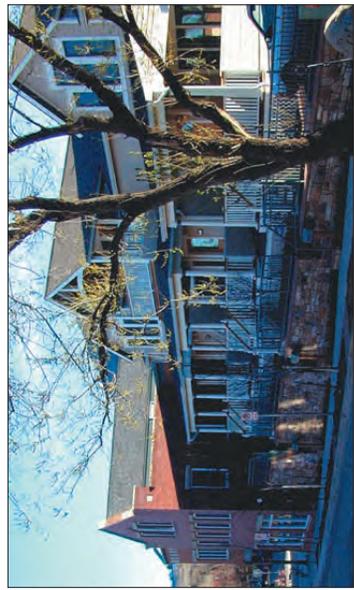
These images reflect some of the character of the built environment that is envisioned:



Market.



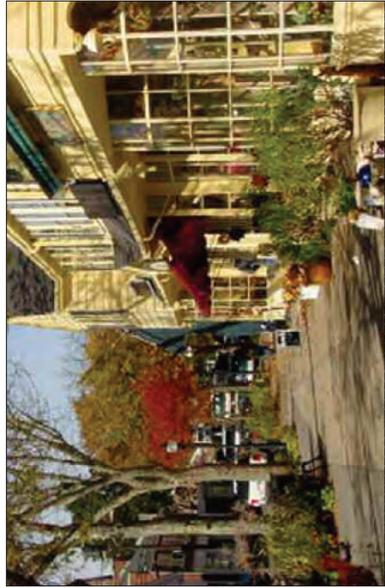
Retail experience.



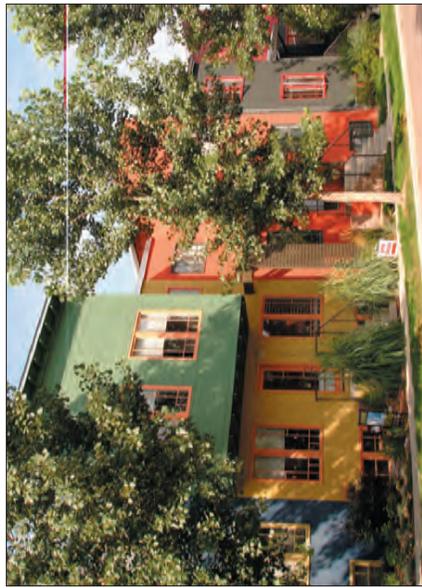
Mixed use.



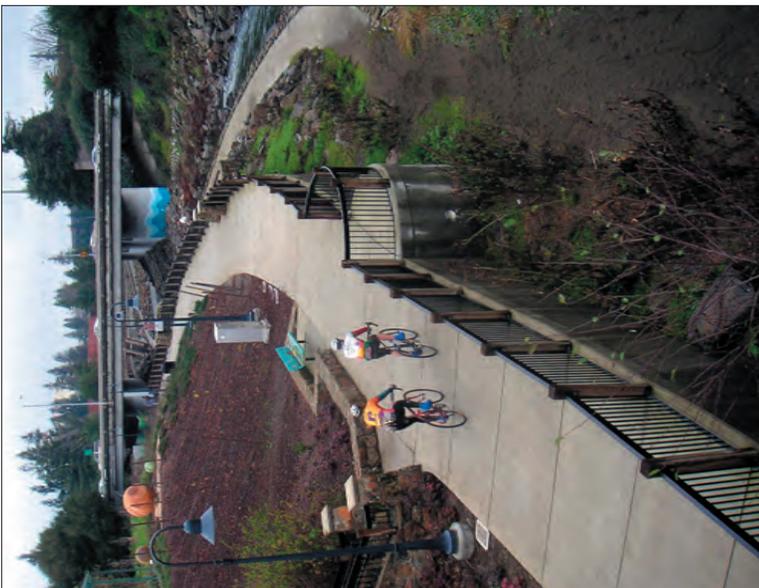
Outdoor dining.



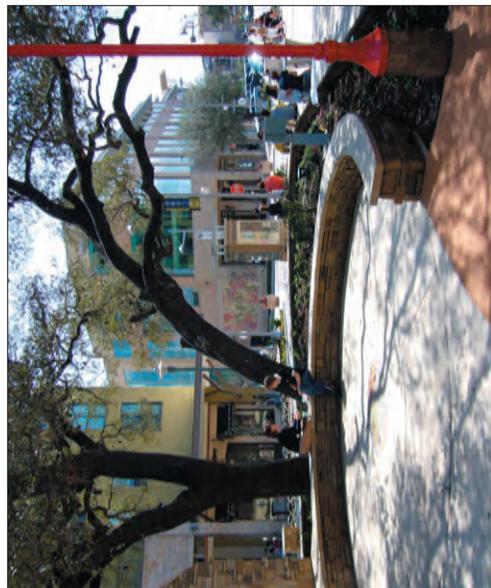
Pedestrian friendly



Multifamily



Pedestrian and bike connectivity.



Plaza.

Appendix - 3

Workshop Summary #3



Workshop #3 Summary

Downtown Master Plan and Design Guidelines

City of Monroe, Washington

A "Vision" is a general description of what the community wants to be and how it will appear at some point in the future.

Overall Project Summary

The City of Monroe has embarked on a process to develop a Downtown Master Plan and Design Guidelines for improvements in the city center.

The community seeks to revitalize the downtown area, while also working to make sure the future development reflects the character and lifestyle that first attracted residents to Monroe. This objective presents a challenge: How to plan for the future, while respecting the past and fitting with the community's current values and vision. Community participation was the fundamental concept of this planning effort.

Workshop #3 marked the final workshop of the process. The final drafts of the Downtown Master Plan and Design Guidelines will be presented on April 22nd. Please contact the city for information regarding this presentation.

Summary of January 31, 2008 Illustrated Vision & Implementation.

The agenda for the evening:

Workshop Summary & Presentation

- Introduction
- Order of the Evening
- Workshop #2 Summary
- Presentation - Downtown Master Plan & Design Guidelines

Design Exercise

- Illustrative Plan Vision
- Prioritization & Phasing

Questions and Next Steps

Design Exercise: Illustrative Plan Vision

The first question asked participants how well the illustrative plans captured the vision for Monroe. Next asked, was which elements shown on the illustrative scenarios were most important in the realization of the vision. Finally, the appropriateness of the location of the civic facility for festivals and other events was examined. The following are some of the responses (Illustrative Plan scenarios are displayed on Pages 3 and 4):

#1: Illustrative Plan Vision

- Very well, I like both options. But make priorities for how this will happen.
- Good - Downtown needs to be preserved as well as enhanced so the owners can prosper.
- Very well. Scenario B is better in my mind.
- A modern view of an historic section can only be good. Higher density must be mitigated.
- Excellent job. What happened to the Al Borlin Parkway to help reduce the "fly through" traffic?

#2 Important Elements

- Utilize the alley spaces for parking/walking and double-front the businesses.
- Landscaping, pedestrian friendliness, gateways, and wayfinding signs.
- Main Street historical facade uplift.
- Zoning first; infrastructure second.
- Higher density residential to support new commercial.
- Streetscape and existing building improvements.
- Fix the traffic and parking issues.

#3 Civic Facility & Festival Lot

- Location is great, but school administrative building needs daily utilization.
- Needs more exposure.
- I think it is a great idea as it will bring more people downtown.
- The proposed location is in a great spot, being close to Al Borlin Park and creates another focal point for downtown.
- Excellent location, but I would like to see streets (parts of Fremont, Charles and Ferry) closed during events.



School Administration building and adjacent open space.



School Administration Building.



Existing streetscape elements.

Design Exercise: Prioritization & Phasing

Participants were asked which elements of the Downtown Master Plan should be completed first and then at later phases. Then space for general comments and ideas was provided:

#1 Phases

- 1) Streetscape, gateway and wayfinding improvements, including street trees benches, pocket parks, etc.
- 2) Redesign of the traffic circulation.
- 3) Civic center.
- 4) Historic facade improvements along Main Street.
- 5) Implementation of the Design Guide- lines.

#2 General Comments

- Al Borlin Park should be an extension of the urban environment.
- Plan needs to create a "walking feel".
- Shoppers at the Kelsey area and Fairground attendees need easy transportation routes to downtown.
- Landscaping and street trees need to be appropriately sized, as to compliment and not block the facade of a building.
- Utilities need to be underground.
- The focus should be first on Main Street and the downtown core then on the other areas.

Illustrative Plan - Scenario A



Illustrative Plan - Scenario B



For more information contact:

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Appendix - 4

Funding Mechanisms

To achieve the goals and objectives set forth in the City of Monroe Downtown Master Plan, a variety of funding mechanisms will be needed. The urban design improvements recommended in the plan are ambitious, and a concerted effort on the part of the City, residents and business and property owners is needed to realize their completion.

Funding assistance for private development and economic development includes New Market Tax Credits, Historic Tax Credits, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, Federal Loan Guarantees to financial institutions, Federal matching funds for Small Business Investment Corporations, Federal funding to assist local Community Development Corporations, revolving loan funds set up by local financing institutions for redevelopment and business creation (to help satisfy Community Reinvestment Act obligations), and standard financing for market rate development.

Public funding mechanisms for redevelopment include Community Renewal District bond funding, local improvement districts, capital improvement projects, grants from public and private sources, general obligation bonds approved by the public, bridge loans, low interest loan pools, preservation tax credits, other tax credits, donations/private funds and general fund expenditures.

Private Sector Improvements

Tax Credits

Tax credits are powerful funding incentives for private development. There are three basic credits available now that have application in redevelopment: New Market tax credits; Historic tax credits; and Low-income housing tax credits. The rules for tax credit investment are laid out in the US Internal Revenue Code. Tax credits allow a dollar for dollar reduction in tax (not income) and thus are of use to anyone with a need for tax reduction. Tax credits are often sold (securitized) to investors, allowing non-profits and project owners unable to use them to gain funding for construction and other allowable project costs.

New Market Tax Credits

New market tax credits require the designation of eligible census tracts by the federal government. Monroe's downtown area has not been so designated. To gain these tax credits the city must designate an area as an empowerment zone in which to use the credits and then apply for the designation. The New Market credit pays a percentage of eligible project costs.

Historic Tax Credits

Historic tax credits require that the project be in a historic district as a contributing structure or that the structure is listed on the National Historic Register. Historic tax credits can be applied to 20 percent of eligible project costs. In Washington there is also a special valuation property tax abatement program for owners of listed structures that offers a ten-year reduction in valuation equal to the amount of the renovation cost. For the downtown, the combination of credits and property tax abatement can offer a powerful incentive. In order to make use of Historic Tax Credits, the City should promote designation of eligible buildings to the National Register.

Low Income Housing Tax Credits

Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC's) can be used for providing housing to households at or below 60% of medium income and provide either four percent or eight percent credits. The Department of Housing and Urban Development calculates these statistics each year for specific areas. It is not necessary for all units in a building to be affordable to receive the tax credit; the credit applies only to those units that are eligible. To receive the credit, the units must be kept affordable for fifteen years to receive ten years of tax credits.

Other Funding Sources for Housing

The Washington State Housing Finance Commission has a variety of housing assistance programs including:

- low-interest mortgages, down payment assistance, and education programs for homebuyers
- tax-exempt bond programs to fund for-profit multi-family housing for low and moderate income households and non-profit housing for low-to-moderate income households
- a tax-exempt bond program to fund facilities and equipment for non-profit projects
- a small non-profit loan program called Capital Plus

The Washington Community Reinvestment Association provides housing and economic revitalization funding for non-profits, for-profits and joint ventures in Washington State.

CTED offers programs for housing rehabilitation and new construction and is the distributor of state home funds from HUD. Funding is also available from the Department of Housing and Urban Development for first time homebuyers.

Mortgage guarantee programs - The federal government has a series of grants for guaranteeing mortgages on single-family and multifamily housing in order to reduce local lender risk (see the Funding table in the appendix).

Snohomish County Office of Housing, Homelessness & Community Development county receives CDBG funding directly from HUD. The City combines CDBG, Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG), HOME, Supportive Housing Program (SHP) grants to provide approximately \$6 million dollars annually in Federal HUD funds to benefit the homeless, low and moderate-income people in the community. The office of Housing and Community Development also administers the Affordable Housing Trust Fund which generates approximately 1 million annually, which is used for the development of affordable housing.

Federal Matching Funds for SBICs

Small Business Investment Corporations (SBIC's) are business development venture funds for business creation and development that are regulated by the Small Business Administration. The federal government will match local funding at a three to one ratio. What this means is that if local investors, banks and others form a SBIC with \$1 million in start-up funding, it may be possible to get grants of up to \$3 million to match. Since the master plan calls not only for infrastructure, but also new businesses to provide the services that are desired by residents, the formation and operation of a Monroe SBIC could be a means for creating and retaining business in the downtown area. SBIC's are allowed to use funds for investment in small business and to act as an advisory resource. This means that the SBIC employees could fund and advise businesses on issues such as effective use of information technology, effective retailing practices, financial management, employee management, efficient use of resources, etc. For more information see: <http://www.small-businessnotes.com>

Revolving Loan Funds

A revolving fund is a low-interest financing pool set up by local lenders acting together to meet Community Reinvestment Act obligations. The funds are not grants; borrowers are expected to pay back the loans to finance future loans. The fund can have its own investment criteria regarding the type of lending that will be underwritten. In addition to meeting CRA obligations, revolving funds also generate customer loyalty to participating institutions and serve to keep local money from interest payments and administration costs in local circulation.

Standard Financing

Standard financing relies upon the perceived market feasibility of the individual project and upon the track record and capacity of the developer applying for financing. Standard financing uses construction loans that are then “taken out” by permanent loans, in the case of commercial buildings. For housing that is to be sold, the permanent loan is taken by the buyer, and the issuance of the loan relies upon an appraisal of the property and the buyer’s credit and capacity to make payment.

Public Sector Improvements

Community Renewal District Bond Funding

Under Washington state law, Section RCW 35.81 authorizes municipalities to create community renewal areas. The same law authorizes the issuance of bonds to be funded by the excess property and excise taxes produced by the effect of the local redevelopment area plan. In essence, this is similar to tax increment financing. This tool would be particularly useful in the Al Borlin Neighborhood.

Creating a community renewal area requires a finding of blight. The definition of a blighted area contains references to public safety and health, and also includes “age or obsolescence of buildings or improvements, whether residential or nonresidential, inadequate provision for...open spaces... inappropriate uses of land or buildings... defective or inadequate street layout; faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility or usefulness... diversity of ownership... improper subdivision or obsolete platting... the existence of conditions that... substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the municipality or its environs or retards the provision of housing accommodations...”.

A community renewal area allows the city to define an area within which it is granted the following powers by the Community Renewal Act:

(1) To undertake...community renewal projects...to make and execute contracts...necessary or convenient to the exercise of its powers...

(2) To provide or to arrange or contract for...of services, privileges, works, streets, roads, public utilities or other facilities for, or in connection with, a community renewal project; to install, construct, and reconstruct streets, utilities, parks, playgrounds, and other public improvements...

(3) To provide financial or technical assistance, using available public or private funds...for the purpose of creating or retaining jobs, a substantial portion of which, as determined by the municipality, shall be for persons of low income.

(4) To make payments, loans, or grants to...existing or new owners and tenants of property in the community renewal areas as compensation for any adverse impacts... and/or consideration for commitments to develop, expand, or retain land uses that contribute to the success of the project or plan...

(5) To contract with a person or public body to provide financial assistance...to property owners and tenants impacted...and to provide incentives to property owners and tenants to encourage them to locate in the community renewal area after adoption of the community renewal plan.

6) Within the municipality, to enter upon any building or property in any community renewal area, in order to make surveys and appraisals... to acquire by purchase, lease...or otherwise, any real property and such personal property as may be necessary for the administration of the provisions herein contained...to...prepare for redevelopment any such property; to dispose of any real property; to insure or provide for the insurance of any real or personal property or operations of the municipality against any risks or hazards, including the power to pay premiums on any such insurance...

(7) To invest any community renewal project funds held in reserves...

(8) To borrow money and to...accept, advances, loans, grants, contributions and any other form of financial assistance from the federal government, the state, county, or other public body, or from any sources, public or private... and to enter into and carry out contracts in connection therewith.

(9) Within the municipality, to make...all plans necessary to the carrying out of the purposes of this chapter and to contract with any person, public or private, in making and carrying out such plans... Such plans may include, without limitation: (a) A comprehensive plan... (b) community renewal plans, (c) plans for carrying out... voluntary or compulsory repair and rehabilitation of buildings and improvements, (d) plans for the enforcement of state and local laws, codes, and regulations relating to the use of land and the use and occupancy of buildings... (e) appraisals, title searches, surveys, studies, and other preliminary plans and work necessary... and (f) plans to provide financial or technical assistance to a person or public body for the purpose of creating or retaining jobs,

(10) To prepare plans for the relocation of families displaced ...

(11) To appropriate such funds and make such expenditures as may be necessary... and ...Levy taxes ... (b) acquire land... (c) close, vacate, plan, or replan streets, roads, sidewalks, ways, or other places; (d) plan or replan, zone or rezone any part of the municipality; (e) adopt annual budgets for the operation of a community renewal agency...and (f) enter into agreements with such agencies or departments... respecting action to be taken by such municipality....

(12) Within the municipality, to organize, coordinate, and direct the administration of the provisions of this chapter...

(13) To contract with a person or public body to assist in carrying out the purposes of this chapter.

(14) To exercise all or any part or combination of powers herein granted.

This list of powers provides a regulatory framework based upon a geographic boundary and thus may simplify code issues that would otherwise require rather time-consuming work on the part of the planning department. Note that the renewal district does not have the power of eminent domain, which remains in the hands of the city. To implement the plan the process is as follows:

- The city adopts a resolution finding that “One or more blighted areas exist in such municipality; and...the rehabilitation, redevelopment...is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals, or welfare of the residents of such municipality.”
- When the finding is adopted the city governing body then chooses the format of the redevelopment agency. It can be the city itself, or a board or commission, or several other formats.
- The city then creates a renewal plan in conformance with the comprehensive plan designating areas that are appropriate for community renewal. If the plan is not in conformance the city may amend the comprehensive plan. The downtown master plan can form the basis for such a redevelopment plan.
- Prior to adoption of the plan public hearings must be held subject to public notice requirements including notification of affected property owners. After adoption, the redevelopment agency will have the powers within the area as listed above.

RCW 35.81 enables funding options including bonds, special assessments on properties benefiting from district improvements and local improvement bonds based on local improvement districts. If the redevelopment agency acquires land, it is authorized to pay bonds using the excess property tax revenues produced by the property after redevelopment, based upon average taxes for the five years preceding redevelopment. In addition, the statute authorizes that “the municipality may annually pay into the fund... any and all excess of the excise tax received by it from business activity in the community renewal area over and above the average of the annual excise tax collected for a five year period immediately preceding the establishment of a community renewal area.”

The importance of creating a renewal area is that it would allow the adoption of the Downtown Master Plan as an **economic development tool**; the goals of the plan would become the purposes of the renewal district. The plan areas can be as small as one building site, or cover the entire downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. A district would enable funding for organization and survey work (historic and other) recommended in the plan. It would also focus and centralize actions and decisions regarding redevelopment in the area and provide a single information resource for those interested in Downtown.

The Renewal Agency would be a quasi-municipal corporation under state law and is responsible to the public. The enabling legislation allows the agency to contract with any person, public or private, to carry out the renewal plans. It is suggested that the City institute a renewal district and contract with the Monroe Downtown Foundation for services of implementation.

Local Improvement Districts

A Local Improvement District may be used for some key public improvement projects. In a Local Improvement District, a group of properties is defined that will be assessed a designated amount for a specific time period in order to fund improvements. Bonds may be issued based on the assessment's income stream, which allows a large project to be constructed in one stage; therefore, this tool is often an attractive way to fund major improvements. Such districts are often used to finance the construction of sidewalks and related streetscape improvements in a downtown area. The advantage is that this can accelerate construction of improvements that would otherwise have to wait for a CIP allocation. It also engages those who will benefit most directly in funding the improvements.

A local improvement district can be established only when there is agreement of the majority of the property owners that will be assessed. To do so, property owners must recognize benefits to their properties and businesses in order to support construction of the proposed improvements; the property owners therefore perceive that there is the promise of a reasonable benefit from their investment. (Note that local governments can also participate in special improvement districts as property owners.) This tool also can be used to fund ongoing and necessary maintenance of improvements.

Capital Improvement Projects

Each year, the City may allocate a portion of its Capital Improvements Program (CIP) budget toward implementation of public-sector improvements. These funds come from the City's general fund. Construction and/or maintenance located in the right of way, especially streetscape improvements, is a good example.

CIP funding is best suited for projects that can be completed within a single year or that can be phased without a multi-year financial commitment. For example, a limited portion of sidewalks may be constructed each year, or a fixed number of street furnishings may be acquired annually. These funds are well-suited for improvements that benefit the community at large.

This tool is especially useful for projects that must move quickly. It does require establishing some projects within the annual CIP plan. Wayfinding systems and gateway improvements are appropriate types of projects. In addition, these funds could be used as a contribution to larger projects, such as the construction of parking facilities, when joint ventured with private development or a not-for-profit organization.

Recommended application of CIP funds:

- Streetscape improvements
- Wayfinding
- Gateways
- Pedestrian Walks/Trails
- Parks

General Obligation Bonds

General obligation bonds commit a portion of the City's annual income stream to designated projects. In Monroe, the city would commit a portion of sales tax revenues to a designated project. Bonds are then issued for the work, based on the projected revenues.

The issuance of bonds is approved by City-wide election and is best suited for projects that provide general public benefit. This approach spreads the costs of improvements over a wider population and can speed up implementation schedules. For example, funding for a performing arts and/or community center or support for the Farmer's Market could be provided from general obligation bonds.

Recommended application of General Obligation Bonds:

- Community Center with Performance Space
- Parking structure
- Farmer's Market Support Facility
- Children's Museum
- Expanded City Offices
- Mill Creek Corridor Improvements/Amenities

Limitations on Local Government Economic Development Financing

As financial partners in economic development, cities and counties can invest public funds in a limited, but meaningful manner to promote industrial and commercial growth. This investment may include infrastructure improvements and/or increasing the number of industrial and commercial properties. Local government investment in the state of Washington is restricted by the state constitution under what is known as the lending of credit clause. A number of economic development councils have listed [economic development incentives](#) on their Web sites for new and expanding businesses which illustrate some of the programs authorized by the statutes.

General Authority

RCW 35.21.703 - provides general authority for cities to engage in economic development programs. This statute gives authority for cities to contract with private nonprofit corporations for the purpose of engaging in economic development programs, assuming the underlying transaction is constitutional. The statute precludes cities from entering into contracts with for-profit corporations.

RCW 36.01.085 - provides general authority for counties to engage in economic development programs.

B&O Tax Credit for New Employment for International Services Activities in Eligible Areas (RCW 82.04.44525) provides tax exemptions for businesses in community empowerment zones that provide selected international services.

Community Empowerment Zones and Rural Enterprise Zones (RCW 43.63A.700-715) Not implemented by Dept. of Community, Trade and Economic Development. See [Rural Area Marketing Plan Evaluation](#) by the State Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee, November 1999

The Community Redevelopment Financing Act (Ch. 39.88 RCW) is this state's equivalent to the tax increment financing mechanisms heavily utilized in many other states. The Washington Supreme Court ruled that this legislation was unconstitutional. See [Leonard v. Spokane](#), 127 Wn. 2d 195 (1995).

Community Revitalization Financing (Ch. 39.89 RCW (Ch. 212 Laws 2001)) authorizes counties, cities, towns, and port districts to create tax increment areas within their boundaries where community revitalization projects and programs are financed by diverting a portion of the regular property taxes imposed by local governments within the tax increment area. Has an expiration date of July 1, 2010.

- Community Revitalization Financing (Tax Increment Financing), MRSC

Rural Counties - Enhanced Economic Vitality - ESSB 5594 (Ch 164 Laws of 1999) Final Bill Report provides enhanced flexibility for use of CERB funds to allow funding of telecommunications infrastructure, transportation, improvements, and pre-construction costs of infrastructure and facilities; creates a “one stop clearinghouse” to coordinate development of housing for agricultural employees; changes eligibility requirements for distressed area sales and/or business and occupation tax relief ; changes Washington state development loan fund committee to the Rural Washington loan fund; revises public facility grants and loan provisions relating counties, cities and towns planning under GMA including preferences for competing requests.

Industrial Redevelopment Bonds (Ch. 39.84 RCW) authorizes municipal corporations (including cities and counties) to pass ordinances creating public corporations “for the purpose of facilitating economic development and employment opportunities in the state of Washington through the financing of the project costs of industrial development facilities” (RCW 39.84.030). The public corporations so formed are separate from the municipality that created them, and municipalities cannot give or lend money to these public corporations (RCW 39.84.060). The powers of these public corporations are listed in RCW 39.84.080, and include the power to issue revenue bonds to construct and maintain one or more industrial development facilities. The definition of “industrial development facilities” is quite broad, and even includes public sports facilities and parking facilities. See RCW 39.84.020(6) for the complete definition. Note the following: “No public corporation created under this chapter may operate any industrial development facility as a business other than as lessor, seller, or lender.” RCW 39.84.070.

List of jurisdictions with Development Corporations under RCW 39.84

Parking and Business Improvement Areas. Cities use BIAs for a variety of purposes including parking improvements, security and maintenance of common areas, business retention and recruitment, marketing programs, special events and promotion, programs to improve the pedestrian environment, projects to enhance aesthetic appearance, and administrative costs. In some cities, the establishment of a business improvement area has been quite controversial. Questions have been raised concerning the constitutionality of chapter 35.87A RCW (which authorizes BIAs), and two state supreme court cases have ruled on its validity. See City of Seattle v. Rogers Clothing for Men, Inc., 114 Wn.2d 213 (1990) and Bellevue Plaza v. Bellevue, 121 Wn.2d 397 (1993). In both cases, the court affirmed the authority of cities to utilize the provisions of ch. 35.87A RCW to establish parking and business improvement areas.

Public Corporations (RCW 35.21.730-757) - Under RCW 35.21.730, et. seq., general purpose local government may establish “public corporations, commissions or authorities.” These special purpose quasi-municipal corporations have become known as “PDA’s.” The statutory purpose for the creation of a public corporation under this statute is to improve the administration of authorized federal grants or programs, to improve governmental efficiency and services, or to improve the general living conditions in the urban areas of the state. The provision was initially enacted to authorize counties, cities, and towns to participate in and implement federally-assisted programs, including revenue sharing. See MRSC Web page on Public Corporations under RCW 35.21.730 - 755.

Public Facilities Districts (Ch. 36.100 RCW and Ch. 35.57 RCW). Public facilities districts (PFDs) are municipal corporations, have independent taxing authority and are taxing districts under the state constitution. There are two enabling statutes, Ch. 36.100 RCW for counties and Ch. 35.57 RCW for cities, towns, and contiguous group of cities and towns. Public facilities districts may acquire, construct, and operate sports facilities, entertainment facilities, convention facilities or regional centers and related parking facilities. “Regional center” is defined as convention, conference, or special events center, or any combination of facilities, and related parking facilities, serving a regional population constructed, improved, or rehabilitated after July 25, 1999 at a cost of at least ten million dollars, including debt service. See MRSC Web Page on Public Facilities Districts.

Stadium, Convention, Arts and Tourism Facilities (Ch. 67.28 RCW) authorizes municipalities to impose taxes on lodging facilities under this chapter and acquire and operate tourism-related facilities.

Provision of Telecommunications Services by Public Utility Districts and Rural Port Districts, Ch. 81 Laws of 2000 (SSB 6675). See also \ “Access” Economic Development and Telecommunications

Tourist Promotion (RCW 35.21.700) provides power to cities and towns to expend moneys and conduct tourist promotion of resources and facilities.

Tourist Promotion Area (Ch. 35.101 RCW (Ch. 148 Laws of 2003)) A county with a population of more than 40,000, but less than 1 million, and the cities in it, may form a “tourist promotion area.” Within that area, they may assess a charge of up to \$2 per night on the sale of lodging. The revenue must be used for “tourism promotion,” which is defined as “activities and expenditures designed to increase tourism and convention business, including but not limited to advertising, publicizing, or otherwise distributing information for the purpose of attracting and welcoming tourists and operating tourism destination marketing organizations.” Formation of an area is initiated by a petition to the legislative body that must have the signatures of people in the lodging industry that would be paying at least 60 percent of the charges in the area. Up to six different classifications are allowed, each with a different charge, but no charge can be more than \$2 per night. Unless a county and city sign an interlocal agreement to do otherwise, a county can form an area only in an unincorporated area and a city, only within the boundaries of the city.

Other Statutes with Economic Development Applications

Contracts with Community Service Organizations (RCW 35.21.278) authorizes county, city, town, school district, metropolitan park district and recreation district, or park and recreation service area to contract with community service organizations for public improvements.

Local Improvement District (Ch. 35.43 RCW) permits formation of local improvement districts.

Interlocal Cooperation Act (Ch. 39.34 RCW) permits local governments to cooperate with other local governments to provide public facilities and services.

Local Transportation Act (Ch. 39.92 RCW) authorizes local governments to develop and adopt programs for the purpose of jointly funding, from public and private sources, transportation improvements necessitated in whole or in part by economic development and growth within their respective jurisdictions. Local governments operating under this chapter are authorized to impose transportation impact fees on development to pay for “reasonable and necessary off-site transportation improvements to solve the cumulative impacts of planned growth and development in the plan area.” RCW 39.92.030(4).

The Act specifies various requirements for transportation programs. The authorized programs must be based on an adopted transportation plan and the fee must be calculated from a specified list of capital projects. Traffic impact fees cannot exceed an amount that the local government can demonstrate is reasonably necessary as a direct result of the proposed development.

Transportation Benefit Districts (TBD) (RCW 35.21.225). Cities are authorized to establish one or more transportation benefit districts to fund the capital improvement of city streets within the district. The improvements must be: (1) consistent with state, regional and local transportation plans; (2) necessitated by congestion levels attributable to economic growth; and (3) partially funded by local government and/or private developer contributions. Transportation benefit districts are quasi-municipal corporations with independent taxing authority (RCW 36.73.040.) Transportation benefit districts are given authority to levy a property tax (RCW 36.73.060), issue general obligation bonds (RCW 36.73.070), establish LIDs (RCW 36.73.080), and impose impact fees (RCW 36.73.120) to fund transportation improvements. As of April 2003 only two have been formed and only one appears to operating (Point Roberts TBD, Whatcom County). Legal issues have been raised which question the use of TBD’s. See Memo on Transportation Benefit Districts Analysis and Report, by Bob Berg to Dennis Ingham, TransAid Service Center, WSDOT, July 27, 1998. See also Transportation Benefit District Information in the Legislative Transportation Committee’s 2003 Transportation Resource Manual.

Appendix - 5

Market Feasibility

Monroe Downtown Study Site 1 Artist Lofts

Lot Program

Lot Size (Square Feet)	46,800
Lot Coverage (Percent)	20%
Usable Open Space (Square Feet)	26,490
Floor Area Ratio	0.33
Building Square Feet	15,400
Building Height	
Building Stories	
Floor Plates (Square Feet)	9,450
Multi Residential Space	11,900
Commercial Space	3,500
Residential Parking	1.8 25
Commercial Parking	11
Surface Spaces on Site	36
Surface Parking Area	10,860
Parking Structure Footprint	-
Parking (on Street)	-

Residential Units

Unit Type	Square Ft	Number	Total SF	Rent/SF	Unit Rent
Average	850	14	11,900	\$ 1.20	\$ 1,020
Multi Common Area		0%	-		
Multi Square Feet			11,900		
Total Residential SF			11,900		

Commercial Space

Leasable Commercial Square Feet	3,500
Commercial Common Area	-
Total Commercial Square Feet	3,500

Project Costs	
Site Acquisition	46,800 \$ 12.25 \$ 573,300
Building Construction	
Commercial	3,500 \$ 106 \$ 371,000
Loft Residential	11,900 \$ 109 \$ 1,297,100

Surface Parking	36 \$ 1,200 \$ 43,440
Structured Parking	\$ 23,000 \$ -
Landscaping	26,490 \$ 4 \$ 105,960
Commercial Tenant Improvements	3,500 \$ - \$ -

Construction Subtotal	\$ 1,817,500
Non-Construction Costs	20% \$ 363,500

Project Cost	\$ 2,754,300
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Commercial Rental Pro Forma

Gross Rent NNN	3,500 \$ 15.50 \$ 54,250
Parking Revenue	11 \$ - \$ -
Vacancy, Credit Loss	5% \$ (2,713)
Effective Gross Income	\$ 51,538
Management/Reserves	4% \$ (2,062)
Net Income	\$ 49,476
Capitalized Value	7.50% \$ 659,680
Total Value Created By Rental Project	\$ 659,680
Project Cost	\$ (625,290)
Surplus or (Gap)	\$ 34,390
	5.5%

Monroe Downtown Study Site 1 Artist Lofts

Project Value as Rental

Residential Rental Pro Forma			
Gross Rent	14	\$ 1,020	\$ 171,360
Parking Revenue	25	\$ -	\$ -
Vacancy, Credit Loss	5%	\$ -	\$ (8,568)
Effective Gross Income			\$ 162,792
Maint. Reserves	4%	\$ -	\$ (6,512)
Net Income			\$ 156,280
Capitalized Rental Loft Value	7.50%	\$ -	\$ 2,083,738
Commercial Value			\$ 659,680
Project Cost			\$ (2,754,300)
Surplus or (Gap)			\$ (10,882)
Return on Cost			-0.4%

Project Value - Residential As Ownership Units

Unit Type	Sale Value	Number	Total
Loft Units	165,750	14	2,320,500
Parking Space	-	25	-
Total Sale Value			2,320,500
Less Brokerage	2.50%	\$ -	\$ (58,013)
Closing Costs	1%	\$ -	\$ (23,205)
Net Sale Value			2,239,283
Commercial Value			\$ 659,680
Total Value Created			2,898,963
Project Cost			\$ (2,754,300)
Surplus or (Gap)			144,663
Return on Cost			5.3%

Monroe Downtown Study
Site 2: 2 Story

Lot Program						
Lot Size (Square Feet)			240,000			
Lot Coverage (Percent)			11%			
Usable Open Space (Square Feet)			192,400			
Floor Area Ratio			0.23			
Building Square Feet			54,400			
Building Height						
Building Stories			2			
Floor Plates (Square Feet)			27,200			
Multi Residential Space			-			
Townhouses			54,400			
Commercial Space			-			
Residential Parking	2		68			
Commercial Parking			-			
Surface Spaces on Site			68			
Surface Parking Area			20,400			
Parking Structure Footprint			-			
Parking (on Street)			-			
Residential Units						
Unit Type	Square Ft	Number	Total SF	Rent/SF	Unit Rent	
Average	-	-	-	\$ 1.00	\$ -	
Multi Common Area		15%	-			
Multi Square Feet			-			
Townhouses	1,600	34	54,400			
Total Residential SF			54,400			

Commercial Space						
Leasable Commercial Square Feet			-			
Commercial Common Area			-			
Total Commercial Square Feet			-			

Project Costs						
Site Acquisition			240,000	\$ 6.00	\$ 1,440,000	
Building Construction						
Commercial			-	\$ -	\$ -	
Multi Residential			-	\$ -	\$ -	
Townhouses			54,400	\$ 127	\$ 6,908,800	
2 hour Fire Separation			-	\$ 6	\$ -	
Surface Parking			68	\$ 1,200	\$ 81,600	
Structured Parking			-	\$ 23,000	\$ -	
Landscaping			10,000	\$ 6	\$ 60,000	
Commercial Tenant Improvements			-	\$ 25	\$ -	
Construction Subtotal					\$ 7,050,400	
Non-Construction Costs				20%	\$ 1,410,080	
Project Cost					\$ 9,900,480	
Project Cost per Square Foot					\$ 182	

Commercial Rental Pro Forma						
Gross Rent NNN			-	\$ 26.00	\$ -	
Parking Revenue			-	\$ 150.00	\$ -	
Vacancy, Credit Loss				5%	\$ -	
Effective Gross Income					\$ -	
Management/Reserves				6%	\$ -	
Net Income					\$ -	
Capitalized Value				7.50%	\$ -	
Total Value Created By Rental Project					\$ -	
Project Cost					\$ -	
Surplus or (Gap)					\$ -	

Monroe Downtown Study
Site 2: 2 Story

Project Value - Residential As Ownership Units			
Unit Type	Sale Value	Number	Total
Multi Units	-	-	-
Townhouses	376,000	34	12,784,000
Parking Space	-	68	-
Total Sale Value			12,784,000
Less Brokerage		6.50%	\$ (830,960)
Closing Costs		1%	\$ (127,840)
Net Sale Value			11,825,200
Commercial Value			\$ -
Total Value Created			11,825,200
Project Cost			\$ (9,900,480)
Surplus or (Gap)			1,924,720
Return on Cost			19.4%

Monroe Downtown Study
Site 2: 3 Story

Lot Program					
Lot Size (Square Feet)			240,000		
Lot Coverage (Percent)			15%		
Usable Open Space (Square Feet)			179,400		
Floor Area Ratio			0.30		
Building Square Feet			72,000		
Building Height					
Building Stories					
Floor Plates (Square Feet)			36,000		
Multi Residential Space			-		
Townhouses			72,000		
Commercial Space			-		
Residential Parking	2		90		
Commercial Parking			-		
Surface Spaces on Site			90		
Surface Parking Area			24,600		
Parking Structure Footprint			-		
Parking (on Street)			-		
Residential Units					
Unit Type	Square Ft	Number	Total SF	Rent/SF	Unit Rent
Average	-	-	-	\$ 1.00	\$ -
Multi Common Area	-	15%	-	-	-
Multi Square Feet	-	-	-	-	-
Townhouses	1,600	45	72,000	-	-
Total Residential SF			72,000		

Commercial Space	
Leasable Commercial Square Feet	-
Commercial Common Area	-
Total Commercial Square Feet	-

Project Costs				
Site Acquisition	240,000	\$	6.00	\$ 1,440,000
Building Construction				
Commercial	-	\$	-	\$ -
Multi Residential	-	\$	-	\$ -
Townhouses	72,000	\$	127	\$ 9,144,000
2 hour Fire Separation	-	\$	6	\$ -
Surface Parking	90	\$	1,200	\$ 108,000
Structured Parking	-	\$	23,000	\$ -
Landscaping	10,000	\$	6	\$ 60,000
Commercial Tenant Improvements	-	\$	25	\$ -
Construction Subtotal				\$ 9,312,000
Non-Construction Costs			20%	\$ 1,862,400
Project Cost				\$ 12,614,400
Project Cost per Square Foot				\$ 175

Commercial Rental Pro Forma				
Gross Rent NNN	-	\$	26.00	\$ -
Parking Revenue	-	\$	150.00	\$ -
Vacancy, Credit Loss			5%	\$ -
Effective Gross Income				\$ -
Management Reserves			6%	\$ -
Net Income				\$ -
Capitalized Value			7.50%	\$ -
Total Value Created By Rental Project				\$ -
Project Cost				\$ -
Surplus or (Gap)				\$ -

Monroe Downtown Study
Site 2: 3 Story

Project Value - Residential As Ownership Units			
Unit Type	Sale Value	Number	Total
Multi Units	-	-	-
Townhouses	376,000	45	16,920,000
Parking Space	-	90	-
Total Sale Value			16,920,000
Less Brokerage		6.50%	\$ (1,099,800)
Closing Costs		1%	\$ (169,200)
Net Sale Value			15,651,000
Commercial Value			\$ -
Total Value Created			15,651,000
Project Cost			\$ (12,614,400)
Surplus or (Gap)			3,036,600
Return on Cost			24%

Monroe Downtown Study
Site 2: 3 to 5 Stories

Lot Program					
Lot Size (Square Feet)	240,000				
Lot Coverage (Percent)	26%				
Usable Open Space (Square Feet)	177,900				
Floor Area Ratio	0.50				
Building Square Feet	120,000				
Building Height					
Building Stories					
Floor Plates (Square Feet)	24,000				
Multi Residential Space	96,000				
Townhouses	24,000				
Commercial Space	-				
Residential Parking	1.4 152				
Commercial Parking	-				
Surface Spaces on Site	152				
Surface Parking Area	38,100				
Parking Structure Footprint	-				
Parking (on Street)	-				
Residential Units					
Unit Type	Square Ft	Number	Total SF	Rent/SF	Unit Rent
Average	875	96	84,000	\$ 1.00	\$ 875
Multi Common Area		14%	12,000		
Multi Square Feet			96,000		
Penthouses	1,500	16	24,000		
Total Residential SF			120,000		

Commercial Space	
Leasable Commercial Square Feet	-
Commercial Common Area	-
Total Commercial Square Feet	-

Project Costs	
Site Acquisition	240,000 \$ 6.00 \$ 1,440,000
Building Construction	
Commercial	- \$ -
Multi Residential	96,000 \$ 127 \$ 12,192,030
Penthouses	24,000 \$ 136 \$ 3,264,000
2 hour Fire Separation	\$ 6 \$ -
Surface Parking	152 \$ 1,200 \$ 182,381
Structured Parking	- \$ 23,000 \$ -
Landscaping	10,000 \$ 6 \$ 60,000
Commercial Tenant Improvements	- \$ 25 \$ -
Construction Subtotal	\$ 15,698,411
Non-Construction Costs	20% \$ 3,139,682
Project Cost	\$ 20,278,094
Project Cost per Square Foot	\$ 169

Commercial Rental Pro Forma	
Gross Rent NNN	- \$ 22.00 \$ -
Parking Revenue	- \$ 150.00 \$ -
Vacancy, Credit Loss	5% \$ -
Effective Gross Income	\$ -
Management/Reserves	6% \$ -
Net Income	\$ -
Capitalized Value	7.50% \$ -
Total Value Created By Rental Project	\$ -
Project Cost	\$ -
Surplus or (Gap)	\$ -

Monroe Downtown Study
Site 2: 3 to 5 Stories

Project Value as Rental	
Residential Rental Pro Forma	
Gross Rent	96 \$ 875 \$ 1,008,000
Parking Revenue	352,500 \$ 20 \$ 84,600,000
Vacancy, Credit Loss	5% \$ (50,400)
Effective Gross Income	\$ 85,557,600
Expenses	96 \$ 3,400 \$ (326,400)
Net Income	\$ 85,231,200
Capitalized Residential Value	7.50% \$ 1,136,416,000
Value of Penthouses less Closing Costs	\$ 5,550,000
Commercial Value	\$ -
Project Cost	\$ (20,278,094)
Surplus or (Gap)	\$ 1,121,687,906
Return on Cost	5531.5%

Project Value - Residential As Ownership Units			
Unit Type	Sale Value	Number	Total
Multi Units	218,750	96	21,000,000
Penthouses	375,000	16	6,000,000
Parking Space	-	152	-
Total Sale Value			27,000,000
Less Brokerage		6.50% \$	(1,755,000)
Closing Costs		1% \$	(270,000)
Net Sale Value			24,975,000
Commercial Value			\$ -
Total Value Created			24,975,000
Project Cost			\$ (20,278,094)
Surplus or (Gap)			4,696,906
Return on Cost			23%

Monroe Downtown Study
Site 3

Lot Program	
Lot Size (Square Feet)	85,000
Lot Coverage (Percent)	75%
Usable Open Space (Square Feet)	-
Floor Area Ratio	1.21
Building Square Feet	103,000
Building Height	-
Building Stories	-
Floor Plates (Square Feet)	-
Multi Residential Space	-
Penthouses	33,000
Commercial Space	70,000
Residential Parking	1.8 40
Commercial Parking	210
Surface Spaces on Site	-
Surface Parking Area	-
Parking Structure Footprint	64,000
Parking (on Street)	-

Residential Units					
Unit Type	Square Ft	Number	Total SF	Rent/SF	Unit Rent
Average	-	-	-	\$ 1.00	\$ -
Multi Common Area	-	15%	-	-	-
Multi Square Feet	-	-	-	-	-
Penthouses	1,500	22	33,000	-	-
Total Residential SF	-	-	33,000	-	-

Commercial Space	
Leasable Commercial Square Feet	64,750
Commercial Common Area	5,250
Total Commercial Square Feet	70,000

Project Costs	
Site Acquisition	85,000 \$ 33.06 \$ 2,810,000
Building Construction	-
Commercial	70,000 \$ 106 \$ 7,420,000
Multi Residential	- \$ -
Penthouses	33,000 \$ 136 \$ 4,488,000
2 hour Fire Separation	- \$ 6 \$ -
Surface Parking	- \$ 1,200 \$ -
Structured Parking	250 \$ 23,000 \$ 5,740,000
Landscaping	- \$ 6 \$ -
Commercial Tenant Improvements	29,750 \$ 25 \$ 743,750
Construction Subtotal	\$ 18,392,550
Non-Construction Costs	20% \$ 3,678,510
Project Cost	\$ 24,881,060

Commercial Rental Pro Forma	
Gross Rent NNN	64,750 \$ 22.00 \$ 1,424,500
Parking Revenue	\$ - \$ -
Vacancy, Credit Loss	5% \$ (71,225)
Effective Gross Income	\$ 1,353,275
Management Reserves	4% \$ (54,131)
Net Income	\$ 1,299,144
Capitalized Value	7.50% \$ 17,321,920
Total Value Created By Rental Project	\$ 17,321,920
Project Cost	\$ (17,884,150)
Surplus or (Gap)	\$ (562,230)

Loan Amt	12,991,440
Equity Req	4,892,710
Net	\$ 1,299,144
Put	(1,152,067)
	\$ 147,077
	3.0%

Monroe Downtown Study
Site 3

Project Value - Residential As Ownership Units

Unit Type	Sale Value	Number	Total
Multi Units	-	-	-
Penthouses	375,000	22	8,250,000
Sale of Spaces over 1/1 DU	23,000	18	404,800
Total Sale Value	-	-	8,654,800
Less Brokerage	-	6.50%	\$ (562,562)
Closing Costs	-	1%	\$ (86,548)
Net Sale Value	-	-	8,005,690
Commercial Value	-	-	\$ 17,321,920
Total Value Created	-	-	25,327,610
Project Cost	-	-	\$ (24,881,060)
Surplus or (Gap)	-	-	446,550
Return on Cost	-	-	1.8%
City Parking on Site	27600	50	1,380,000

Monroe Downtown Study
Site 3

Lot Program

Lot Size (Square Feet)	85,000			
Lot Coverage (Percent)	100%			
Usable Open Space (Square Feet)	-			
Floor Area Ratio w/o Parking	0.95			
Building Square Feet	80,400			
Building Height				
Building Stories				
Floor Plates (Square Feet)	-			
Multi Residential Space	-			
Penthouses	49,400			
Commercial Space	31,000		dev spaces	
Residential Parking	1.8	68		161
Commercial Parking		93		
Surface Spaces on Site		77		
Surface Parking Area	23,000		Str+Surf	
Parking Structure Footprint	2 Floors	31,000	146	223
City Public Spaces		-		
Total parking Spaces on Site		223		

Residential Units

Unit Type	Square Ft	Number	Total SF	Rent/SF	Unit Rent
Average	-	-	-	\$	-
Multi Common Area		15%	-		
Multi Square Feet			-		
Penthouses	1,300	38	49,400		
Total Residential SF			49,400		

Commercial Space

Leasable Commercial Square Feet	28,675
Commercial Common Area	2,325
Total Commercial Square Feet	31,000

Project Costs

Site Acquisition	85,000	\$	33.06	\$	2,810,000
Building Construction					
Commercial	31,000	\$	106	\$	3,286,000
Multi Residential	-	\$	-	\$	-
Penthouses	49,400	\$	136	\$	6,718,400
2 hour Fire Separation		\$	6	\$	-
Surface Parking	77	\$	1,200	\$	92,000
Structured Parking	85	\$	21,500	\$	1,821,767
Landscaping	-	\$	6	\$	-
Commercial Tenant Improvements	13,175	\$	25	\$	329,375

Construction Subtotal		\$	12,247,542
Non-Construction Costs	20%	\$	2,449,508

Project Cost	\$	17,507,050
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Commercial Rental Pro Forma

Gross Rent NNN	28,675	\$	19.50	\$	559,163
Parking Revenue		\$	-	\$	-
Vacancy, Credit Loss		5%	\$	(27,958)	
Effective Gross Income				\$	531,204
Management Reserves		4%	\$	(21,248)	
Net Income				\$	509,956
Capitalized Value		7.50%	\$	6,799,416	
Total Value Created By Rental Project				\$	6,799,416
Project Cost				\$	(5,708,523)
Surplus or (Gap)				\$	1,090,893
					19.1%

Loan Amt	5,409,533
Equity Req	268,990
Net	\$ 509,956
Prot	(482,372)
	\$ 27,584
	10.3%

Monroe Downtown Study
Site 3

Project Value - Residential As Ownership Units

Unit Type	Sale Value	Number	Total
Multi Units	-	-	-
Penthouses	383,500	38	14,573,000
Sale of Spaces over 1/10U	25,800	30	784,320
Total Sale Value			15,357,320
Less Brokerage		6.50%	\$ (998,226)
Closing Costs		1%	\$ (153,573)
Net Sale Value			14,205,521
Commercial Value			\$ 6,799,416
Total Value Created			21,004,937
Project Cost			\$ (17,507,050)
Surplus or (Gap)			3,497,887
Return on Cost			20.0%
City Parking on Site	25800	61	1,577,645